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Southeast Asia Report

VIETNAM

TAP CHI CONG SAN

No. 5, May 1984

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SOUTHEAST ASIA REPORT

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Except where indicated otherwise in the table of contents the following is a complete translation of the monthly theoretical and political journal of the Vietnam Communist Party published in Hanoi.

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IN CELEBRATION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VICTORY OF DIEN BIEN PHU:
UPHOLDING THE DIEN BIEN PHU TRADITION

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 5, May 84 pp 1-4

[Editorial]

[Text] Thirty years have passed since the "earth shattering" victory of Dien Bien Phu.

Dien Bien Phu was the pinnacle of the victory of the 1953-1954 winter-spring strategic offensive and the great victory that concluded the war of resistance by our army and people against the French imperialists.

The victory of Dien Bien Phu brought to an end the nearly 1 century of the tyrannical rule of French colonialism on the Indochina peninsula and protected the accomplishments of the August Revolution. With the victory of Dien Bien Phu, "a small and weak colony won victory over a powerful colonialist country for the first time in history."(1)

Through that victory, we totally liberated the North and set it on the course toward socialism, thereby laying a firm foundation for the cause of liberating the South, reunifying the fatherland and advancing the entire country to socialism.

President Ho Chi Minh said: "It was a great victory for our people and also a common victory for all oppressed peoples of the world. The victory of Dien Bien Phu further illustrated the truth of Marxism-Leninism in our times: "Wars of aggression waged by the imperialists will surely be defeated, the liberation revolutions of nations will surely achieve success."(2)

The victory of Dien Bien Phu was the result of many factors. First, it was the result of the combined strength of the whole country resisting the enemy in a spirit of determination to fight and win. This combined strength consisted of the moral and material strengths of both the frontline and the rear area, especially the political and moral strength of the entire party, all the people and the entire army responding to the appeal by President Ho to save the country: "We would rather sacrifice everything than suffer the loss of our country, than be enslaved."(3) The correct political and military

lines of our party and the wise leadership provided by it greatly increased this strength. Combined with the strength of the support from the people of the world, this strength became a powerful material force. The enemy neither anticipated nor understood this remarkable strength. Each soldier on the front, each civilian in the rear carried this strength within themselves, and it became the factor determining victory on the battlefield.

Secondly, our party had a thorough understanding of the viewpoint concerning the use of violent revolutionary force, creatively applied the principles of Marxism-Leninism on war and revolution, on leading the armed struggle in a manner coordinated with the political and other forms of struggle, on building the armed forces under the specific circumstances of our country and adopted a correct political line and military line. Our party adopted correct, creative policies and measures for forging and training the armed forces in the course of combat, in each decisive stage of the war, built a strong and solid rear area, one that wholeheartedly reinforced the frontlines, and truly turned that rear area into a constant factor of victory in the revolutionary war. Our party, with a full understanding of the laws of a people's war and upholding our forefathers tradition of fighting the enemy, provided very precise and wise guidance of strategy, campaigns and tactics and displayed seasoned skills in the application of revolutionary military science and art. The correct leadership provided by our party was the factor of most decisive significance in our victory in the war.

Thirdly, our army was truly an heroic army that fought with extreme bravery and resourcefulness. Our army, having inherited the nation's heroic tradition of resisting foreign aggression and been educated and forged through the tireless efforts of the party and President Ho, was profoundly revolutionary in nature, possessed a higher degree of class consciousness, exhibited ardent patriotism, embodied the spirit of devotion to the people and wholeheartedly served the revolutionary cause of the party, of the people. Our army matured quickly in terms of fighting skill and was always mindful of the party's view that persons who are determined to fight and win, who stand ready to die for their just cause, for their noble ideal must be considered the decisive factor while attaching very much importance to the factors of organization, weapons, equipment, tactics and technical skill.

Fourthly, there was the strong sympathy and support of the socialist countries and the progressive people of the entire world, including the people of France, for the just war being fought by our people, our army. This was a very large source of inspiration to our soldiers on the Dien Bien Phu front as well as the battlefields throughout Indochina.

The war of resistance against France, in general, and the Dien Bien Phu campaign, in particular, constituted a serious challenge to the nation of Vietnam that had just won its sovereignty and independence in the August Revolution.

The victory of the war of resistance against France, the pinnacle of which was Dien Bien Phu, not only protected the fruits of the August Revolution and completely liberated the North, but also laid the foundation for our army and people to achieve victory in the resistance against the United States, thereby

defeating the international gendarme, liberating the South, reunifying the country and setting the entire country on the course to socialism.

The victory of Dien Bien Phu was a victory of tremendous historic significance. To we Vietnamese, Dien Bien Phu was not only an important milestone in the struggle to liberate ourselves, it is also a storehouse of priceless spiritual values. These values are:

The spirit of self-reliance, of depending mainly upon ourselves and liberating ourselves through our own efforts. Pushing ourselves up from the ground with a piece of bamboo, displaying bravery, resourcefulness and creativity, we took weapons from the enemy to fight the enemy and waged a tenacious fight, a fight in which we started with nothing, grew ever stronger, turned our weaknesses into strengths and ultimately won victory over the aggressors.

The spirit of determination to fight and win: the entire party, the entire army and all the people shared a common will. We were neither discouraged in the face of defeat nor arrogant in victory. United as one, we were determined to fight and defeat the enemy and achieve the goal of liberating the country.

The spirit of enduring hardships, surmounting every difficulty and sacrificing everything for the cause of liberating the fatherland: although we did not have sufficient food or clothing and lacked weapons and ammunition, we still fought bravely. All our people made every effort to contribute manpower and materiel to the frontlines under the slogan "Everything for the Frontlines, Everything for Victory."

Revolutionary heroism, a readiness to give one's life to save the country: using one's body as the base piece of a gun, hurling one's body into a rifle pit to make a road and countless other acts of bravery typified the heroism of the soldiers of Dien Bien Phu. They gave their blood to darken the color of the fatherland's flag. Dien Bien Phu is a shining example of revolutionary heroism.

Firm confidence in the correct leadership of the party, in the victory of the revolutionary cause: the leadership of the party is the factor that determines each victory. The strict implementation of the party's line is the first prerequisite to victory for the revolution. Firm confidence in the party's line, in the brilliant future of the fatherland is the foundation of the revolutionary optimism of we Vietnamese. With this firm confidence, this revolutionary optimism, we Vietnamese have endured every deprivation, overcome every difficulty, defeated every enemy and won victory for the revolution.

In celebration of the 30th anniversary of the victory of Dien Bien Phu, let our entire party, our entire army and all our people carry on and enhance the glorious Dien Bien Phu tradition, strengthen their unity and struggle with redoubled effort, determined to record many larger achievements in the cause of building socialism and defending the socialist fatherland.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ho Chi Minh: "Tuyen tap"[Selected Works], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1980, Volume II, p 157.
2. Ibid., p 311.
3. Ibid., Volume I, p 403.

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THE HONOR AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SOLDIER DEFENDING THE SOCIALIST FATHERLAND

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 5, May 84 pp 6-11

[Article by Nguyen Nam Khanh]

[Text] Over the past several decades, under the ever victorious banner of the glorious Communist Party of Vietnam and the great President Ho Chi Minh, one generation of Vietnamese after another, determined to fight and even die for the independence and freedom of the fatherland, for socialism, for their noble international obligation, have displayed great revolutionary heroism and won very glorious victories.

In the long struggle filled with sacrifices and hardships that has been waged by the entire nation, the armed forces have had the honor of manning the frontlines in combat and the joy of contributing their intelligence, talents, energies and flesh and blood, thereby proving themselves worthy of the love and trust of the people and party, of the admiration of the people of the world.

In particular, in the resistance against the United States for national salvation, under the wise and talented leadership of the party and imbued with the truth "there is nothing more precious than independence and freedom," the armed forces, along with all the people, displaying high determination to win total victory over the U.S. aggressors, fought an extremely hard and very brave fight, defeated one war strategy of the U.S. imperialists after another and advanced the resistance against the United States for national salvation to total victory. Our armed forces, all of whom are "loyal to the country, filial to the people," consider "the most beautiful life of all to be life on the frontline fighting the enemy," to be "splitting the Truong Son Mountain Range to save the country" and going to wherever the enemy is, even into their strongholds, to kill them, clinging to the enemy and attacking them, "aiming directly at the enemy and firing," fighting with great resourcefulness and bravery, recording many glorious feats of arms and enhancing the nation's indomitable tradition and the army's tradition of being determined to fight and win. The 4th Congress of the Party praised the armed forces as follows: "Throughout the past several decades, the cadres and soldiers of the heroic People's Armed Forces have fought with extreme bravery, recorded glorious feats of arms, from the battle of Dien Bien Phu to the Ho Chi Minh campaign,

enhanced the glorious tradition of our army and, together with all the people, wrote the remarkable epic of the Vietnamese revolutionary war."

Immediately after the total victory of the resistance against the United States for national salvation, as our people, with great spirit and enthusiasm, were concentrating their intelligence and efforts on the work of healing the wounds of the war and building socialism in accordance with the line of the party, the reactionaries within Beijing ruling circles, in keeping with their plan of big country expansionism and hegemony, openly began pursuing a hostile policy toward Vietnam. In the face of the danger posed to the country by our new enemy, in response to the party's appeal and in fulfillment of their great obligation to the nation, the cadres and soldiers of the armed forces, placing the affairs of country above family and following what had already been years of heavy fighting and tremendous sacrifice, again stood shoulder to shoulder and, together with the new soldiers of each region of the country, eagerly went off to battle, determined to win victory over the Chinese aggressor army. Our people's armed forces, continuing to uphold their fine tradition and display their fine nature, fought very bravely and resourcefully and, along with all the people, made worthy contributions to the victories won over the two wars of aggression of the Chinese reactionaries, thereby inflicting initial defeats upon their plan of expansionism and hegemony and protecting the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the fatherland; at the same time, they united and coordinated with the patriotic armed forces and peoples of the two fraternal countries of Laos and Kampuchea and saved the nation of Kampuchea from genocide.

Today, in the face of the plan of the Chinese reactionaries, a plan that is being carried out in collaboration with the U.S. imperialists and the other reactionaries, to weaken and annex our country by waging a wide-ranging war of sabotage while making the preparations for a war of aggression against our country, the defense of the socialist fatherland demands that our people make every effort to solidify and strengthen the national defense system and build powerful people's armed forces to insure that our country is always ready and fully able to defeat each act of sabotage and each act of aggression by any enemy.

The noble honor and heavy responsibility of defending the fatherland still rest primarily on the shoulders of the soldiers of the armed forces. Clearly cognizant of this, our beloved cadres and soldiers are present at all places of strategic importance, from the frontline on the border, where they stand face to face with the enemy, to the remote islands. Day and night, their weapons at the ready, they guard the borders and skies of the fatherland.

To meet the requirements involved in building powerful people's armed forces and building a regular force, modern people's army, the cadres and soldiers of the armed forces have been and are making strong advances in the various fields of military science and technology and seriously carrying out the campaign to "display the fine nature and increase the fighting strength of the people's armed forces" that was launched by the Party Secretariat, developing it into a vigorous socialist emulation campaign. Our cadres and soldiers have combined their revolutionary zeal with an intense desire to learn in order to meet combat and combat readiness requirements in the new situation. The

people's armed forces, in addition to their constant task of maintaining a high level of combat readiness, also have the responsibility of actively participating in economic construction and making direct contributions to the development of the country. Continuing to display the revolutionary heroism they displayed in combat and productive labor, the cadres and soldiers of the armed forces, willingly accepting every hardship and deprivation involved, have gone into the forests and down to the sea to clear land and restore fields to production as well as participate in creative labor within state-operated enterprises. At these places, they have achieved practical returns by producing grain, food and other wealth, thereby directly improving the living conditions of troops, meeting the needs of combat, the needs involved in the buildup of the army, the building of strategic areas, the coordinating of the economy with the national defense system and the national defense system with the economy and worked along with the people to overcome the common difficulties of the country and help to build the material-technical bases of socialism.

Having been educated by the party, our cadres and soldiers have become increasingly aware of the fact that their national task and international obligation, that national and international interests are identical; they love the people of the fraternal countries as they love their own people and, in a manner consistent with their obligation and sentiments, have gloriously fulfilled their international obligation.

In retrospect, the cadres and soldiers of the people's armed forces, the persons who have been given the responsibility by the fatherland, the people and the party of forming the nucleus in the fight for independence and manning the front rank in the defense of the fatherland, can take pride in the fact that they have carried on the glorious tradition of the nation in a worthy manner, made tremendous contributions and won large victories in the great patriotic war and the fact that they are now manning their weapons in defense of the socialist Vietnamese fatherland.

Having been educated and trained by the glorious communist party, the great President Ho Chi Minh and the heroic people through painstaking effort and received their wholehearted love, assistance and trust, the cadres and soldiers of the armed forces have favorable conditions for making contributions and growing rapidly.

The honor and responsibility of the generations of cadres and soldiers within our armed forces today are to carry on in a worthy manner and enhance the glorious tradition of the nation.

We are proud of our nation, a nation with a glorious tradition that has repeatedly buried aggressor armies to maintain the independence and freedom of the fatherland; a nation that has displayed a high spirit of diligence, bravery and creativity in working to conquer nature to survive and develop; a nation that knows the meaning of the words "the country must be secure in order for the family to be secure" and "the family is destroyed when the country is lost"; a nation of people who are ready to give their lives for the fatherland when the country is invaded.

Our people's view of man's life and death is clear: man must fulfill his duty during his lifetime and leave behind in his death the reputation of not yielding to the enemy, of "rather dying than living in dishonor" and of feeling the deepest love for his compatriots. In friendship, our people's feelings are loyal and pure, their friends are bosom friends." As regards beauty, our people make the clear distinction that "beauty on the inside is better than external beauty." In times of difficulty, our people always maintain an attitude of calm, optimism and confidence, believing that "the more a hero is tested, the better is the person he becomes." It can be said that these precious traditions created the beautiful sentiments and tremendous strengths that have enabled our nation to steadily develop generation after generation and never be conquered by any enemy.

Ever since the party assumed leadership of the Vietnamese revolution, the glorious traditions of the nation have been strongly developed on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and the stand of the working class and assumed a new, profound and beautiful meaning and quality, as best represented by Ho Chi Minh. One of these traditions is the determination to fight and win, the determination to see the revolution through to its conclusion. "A few persons cannot succeed, but many persons joining together can. If this generation does not complete it, subsequent generations must."(1) "We are determined to achieve independence even if it means setting fire to the entire Truong Son Mountain Range."(2) "As long as one aggressor remains in our country, we must continue to fight and drive him off."(3)

Forged in the flames of revolutionary struggle and in the work of building the country, our army has carried on and enhanced the glorious tradition of our forefathers, the tradition that the great President Ho Chi Minh summarized in the words: "Our army is loyal to the country, filial to the people and ready to fight and die for the independence and freedom of the fatherland, for socialism; it completes every task, overcomes every difficulty and wins victory over every enemy." This is the extremely precious heritage, the very beautiful spirit of our army in its combat and construction work in past years, at present and in all years to come.

The honor and responsibility of our soldiers defending the fatherland are based on the knowledge, and the actions taken to support it, that only by struggling for national independence and socialism, for the happiness of the people can each person realize their noble ideals and achieve a happy life.

As we know, today, the fatherland has been reunified and the people of our entire country are advancing toward socialism, gradually repulsing poverty and backwardness and bringing about profound changes in every aspect of life. To achieve the life they have today--even though it still involves many difficulties and even though the enemy still threatens to invade and is constantly looking for ways to sabotage us--our people had to endure a heavy loss of flesh and blood and put untold effort into the work in their fields, at factories, schools, hospitals and scientific-technical research facilities. They are now doing all that they can to change the face of the country each day, constantly strengthen the independence and freedom of the nation and bring increasing comfort and happiness to everyone. Protecting this life, this cause is the greatest honor of the soldiers of the armed forces.

Everyone, soldiers under arms defending the fatherland, laborers who work with hammers or plow and socialist intellectuals, shares the joys and concerns of the entire nation.

However, not everyone recognizes this noble responsibility. Some persons, who have placed their personal interests above the common interests of the country, have been and are pursuing an idle, selfish life, pursuing material interests. They do not consider the goals of "successfully building socialism, building a Vietnamese fatherland of peace, independence, unity and socialism and making positive contributions to the struggle by the people of the world for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism" to be their beautiful *raison d'etre* or great ambition.

One of the traditions of our people is to fulfill one's duty during one's lifetime, fulfill one's responsibility to society and leave behind a good reputation in one's death. This is also the *raison d'etre* of today's generations of Vietnamese, a *raison d'etre* that has specific meaning: "Everything for the socialist Vietnamese fatherland, for the happiness of the people." From the time that they first enter the army, every cadre and soldier, in keeping with this guideline and the requirements of the party, closely associates his life with the cause of defending the fatherland. Countless cadres and soldiers of our people's armed forces have given their lives in defense of the fatherland.

Today, compared to the cadres and soldiers who preceded them, the cadres and soldiers of the generations that have joined the army since the war of resistance against the United States for national salvation have much better circumstances in their favor for developing their talents and minds. Very many persons, clearly aware of their position and responsibility in the work of building and defending the socialist fatherland and unsatisfied with the knowledge they learned in school, have made every effort to learn more and eagerly gone to places where difficulties and hardships exist to help carry out the basic and pressing tasks required by the country. Both their thinking and actions reflect their desire to carry on the tradition of their fathers and older brothers, to continue to make sacrifices and work hard to contribute as much as possible to bring strength and prosperity to the fatherland and happiness to the people. Their thinking is totally foreign to the thinking of simply enjoying the accomplishments of their predecessors. They see it as their responsibility to endeavor to contribute more and more to the socialist fatherland.

They are revolutionary soldiers who always maintain a perfect harmony between the interests of society, of the collective and the interests of the individual and place the interests of the fatherland, of the collective above their personal interests.

The years and months will pass and leave behind no trace whatever of those persons who merely seek to satisfy their personal interests, who live a meaningless life, a life that is not associated with the collective, with society in any way. However, glory, perpetual glory, will come to those who contribute the full measure of their intellect and efforts to the country, to the people. At a time when many difficulties are still be encountered in

everyday life and around us are more than a few persons who are leading worthless lives, we are sharply reminded of the words of a Russian author: "Man only lives once. We must lead a life that avoids the pain of regret over years and months wasted and misspent, avoid shame over a wretched and pitiful past so that when we die, we can say: we gave our entire life, our fullest effort to the most noble cause in life, the cause of struggling for the liberation of mankind."

The greater our honor and pride, the more clearly we recognize the heavy and glorious responsibility of the armed forces in the new stage of the revolution to continuously display high determination in cultivating and forging outstanding soldiers who meet the new requirements of the revolution and the armed forces. The growth of the armed forces has created the conditions for each cadre and soldier to complete his task and constantly make progress. Each stage in the growth of cadres and soldiers is an important contribution to the strengthening of the national defense system and the buildup of the armed forces. The new tasks of the armed forces raise new requirements concerning the quality of the soldier defending the fatherland. The first requirement is that this soldier make every effort to learn and improve himself, raise his awareness of communist ideals, cultivate patriotism, love of socialism and the pure proletarian international spirit, display boundless loyalty to the fatherland and the people, possess a full awareness of the obligation to defend the fatherland, love the army and closely associate himself with the buildup of the army.

Every cadre and soldier must have a thorough understanding of and be determined to work for the implementation of the line of the party and must protect the party, protect the army.

Closely linked to the requirement mentioned above is the requirement of raising one's political standard, becoming more proficient in modern military science and technology, developing one's organizational, command and management skills, improving one's ability to use and maintain each weapon and piece of modern equipment used in combat well, study and conduct research and acquire the necessary knowledge of economic management and the necessary organizational and work skills. At the same time, one must display a high sense of respecting and protecting public property, practice frugality and correct the practices of being too lazy to study and train, of wasting the time and property of the state and army.

Another important requirement is the need to forge the sense of organization and discipline within the army and a precise, urgent, serious and scientific style of work consistent with the requirement of building a modern, regular force army while correcting everything that reflects liberalism, the practice of doing as one sees fit, a lack of organization and a lack of discipline or is a violation of the discipline of the army and the laws of the state. It is necessary to establish a regular force, wholesome and simple lifestyle, one that reflects the correct view toward beauty, raise cultural and spiritual life to a higher level of development and mold the proper relationship between the army and the people, a relationship that is analogous to the relationship between "fish and the water" and typifies the image of the "troops of Uncle Ho" as well as relationships with society, family and friends that reflect the beautiful *raison d'être* "one for all, all for one" and opposes everything that reflects individualism, the selfish style of life, the lifestyle of separating oneself from the collective.

One other requirement that is also very necessary is the need for regular physical training and active participation in physical culture and sports in order to develop the state of health needed to meet the requirements of the hard, urgent and continuous work of the army and the requirements involved in building the country.

Endeavoring to cultivate oneself in accordance with the requirements mentioned above reflects the correct understanding of the honor, the pride and the responsibility of the soldier defending the fatherland in every situation. It is also a basic element of the continuous effort to improve the skills and qualities of the revolutionary military man, of our armed forces and provides the best possible conditions for the soldier becoming a progressive person in the cause of building the socialist fatherland once he has completed his task of defending the fatherland.

Our party, state and people have very high regard for the priceless contributions made by the soldiers who defend the fatherland and feel profound gratitude toward them. At the same time, we are also very clearly aware of our responsibility toward our beloved soldiers. Through the attitudes and sentiments of respect and love and by implementing the regulations and policies that pertain to the army and the army's rear area policies, our party, state and people have been and are expressing their concern and caring for the material and spiritual lives of the soldiers who defend the fatherland. Many places have attached importance to improving the rear service work performed for the army, implementing the policies and regulations that pertain to the army and its rear area and correcting their shortcomings in this regard while proposing necessary amendments to policies and regulations and improvements in the material and spiritual lives of the armed forces.

This concern and care, which are thorough in their scope and exhibit the deep sense of obligation of the party and all the people, of the party organizations, government and mass organizations at each installation to soldiers and their families under present circumstances are truly a source of strong inspiration to our soldiers as they eagerly fulfill their glorious and sacred obligation. Carrying on the fine tradition of their forefathers and with the education and care provided by the party and people, our cadres and soldiers, determined to continuously enhance the skills and qualities of the revolutionary army, will surely fulfill their heavy but noble responsibility well.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ho Chi Minh: "Tuyen tap,"[Selected Works], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1980, Volume 1, p 232.
2. "Nhan dan ta rat anh hung,"[Our People Are Very Heroic], Van Hoc Publishing House, Hanoi, 1960, p 96.
3. Ho Chi Minh: "Tuyen tap,"[Selected Works], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1980, Volume 2, p 565.

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CSO: 4210/22

STRATEGEMS AND BATTLEFIELD DEPLOYMENT IN THE 1953-1954 WINTER-SPRING STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE AND THE DIEN BIEN PHU CAMPAIGN

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 5, May 84 pp 12-18

[Article by Hoang Minh Thao]

[Text] Today, looking back on the historic victory of Dien Bien Phu in the 1953-1954 winter-spring strategic offensive, we feel even greater pride in our party, the leader and organizer of each victory of the Vietnamese revolution. Our party inherited and gloriously enhanced the essence, the strategic genius, the indomitable will displayed by the nation in its several thousand years of resisting foreign aggression.

In any discussion of the adeptness, the skill of our party in guiding the revolutionary war to the victory of Dien Bien Phu, we cannot fail to discuss the art of strategems and battlefield deployment that our party practiced on the basis of creatively applying the military doctrine of Marxism-Leninism to the circumstances of our country. Strategems and battlefield deployment are very important factors of the art of military leadership, in particular, and military art, in general.

In late 1953 and early 1954, our people's resistance against the French colonialists entered a new stage. The comparison of forces between ourselves and the enemy had undergone substantive changes. To resist the war of aggression unleashed by the French imperialists, our people had to wage a full-scale people's war under the leadership of the party, headed by President Ho. Our national liberation war was a just war fought for the independence and freedom of the fatherland. It was on this foundation that our party developed, to a high degree, the people's war battlefield deployment on the basis of the combined forces of national solidarity based on the alliance of workers and farmers. Resistance war forces were developed everywhere and each citizen was a soldier who had absolute confidence in the party's leadership. All our people enthusiastically responded to the appeal by President Ho: "Every man and woman, old and young alike, regardless of their religion, political affiliation or nationality, everyone who is Vietnamese must rise and fight the French colonialists to save the fatherland. Those who have a gun must use it, those who have a sword must use it, those who do not must use a

hoe, a shovel, a stick. Everyone must do everything possible to resist the French colonialists and save the country."(1)

Our armed forces, once small units equipped with very rudimentary weapons, had grown and become powerful in the 7 years of the resistance. Main force divisions had been established. The coordination between the three elements of the military and the popular movement to fight the enemy was developing more with each passing day. As a result of the victories we had won in our campaigns, from the Viet Bac campaign in the autumn and winter of 1947, the 1950 border campaign and the 1951-1952 northwest-upper Laos campaign to the Hoang Hoa Tham campaign, the Ha Nam Ninh campaign and so forth plus the fact that the battlefield deployment of the people's war in all three countries of Indochina was becoming increasingly well established, initiative on the battlefield was ours.

Meanwhile, bogged down in a costly war of aggression, a war that was costly in terms of both manpower and money, the French expeditionary forces and their lackey army, once powerful and self-assured, had become weary, were on the defensive and their morale was low. The areas occupied by them were gradually shrinking. The contradictions inherent in an unjust war of aggression were becoming increasingly evident. In the face of this long and "dirty" war, France was falling ever deeper into a serious crisis.

During the winter and spring of 1953 and 1954, the shape of the battlefield underwent major change. Our free zone and guerrilla base area spread from Cao-Bac-Lang, Thai-Tuyen-Ha and the Northwest (with the exception of Na San) to Thanh-Nghe-Tinh, from the southern portion of Trung Bo to the northern Central Highlands; many revolutionary bases sprung up in between enemy controlled areas from extreme southern Trung Bo to western Nam Bo and resistance war villages burst out like "measles" (in the words of the High Command of the French expeditionary army) even within the Red River Delta. President Ho described this military situation as follows: "The enemy:... enemy forces have suffered heavy losses (about 220,000 men as of November, 1953). With each day that passes, they have fewer European and African troops. On the main battlefield, they keep losing the initiative. Recently, the enemy attempted to penetrate the free area in Interzone 3 and a few places along the seacoast in Interzone 4 but they are still basically on the defensive.

However, the enemy remains strong. We must not underestimate them."(2)

"Our side:... since the fall and winter of 1950, we have won major victories in seven campaigns and seized the initiative on the main battlefield. We have liberated the majority of the vast northwest region. The guerrilla movement is strong everywhere.

The political and technical remolding drives have brought good results. Our army has rapidly grown in size and quality.

Many main force, local and guerrilla troops have recorded very heroic and glorious feats of arms."(3)

At that time, the French government was collaborating with the U.S. imperialists in a search for ways to seize the initiative on the battlefield in the hope of ending the war from a position of strength. The essence of their long-range plan was to widen the war by "using Vietnamese to fight Vietnamese and supporting the war effort through war." By appointing Navarre to replace Salan as commander-in-chief of expeditionary forces, the new government in France hoped to reverse the war situation.

The Navarre plan was a very ambitious plan calling for the strengthening of the strategic general reserve force in order to hold land and possibly break the back of our main force units and the creation of powerful mobile reserve forces to launch land-grabbing attacks against free areas and conduct sweep operations against our guerrilla bases.

Navarre foresaw three strategic areas in which our forces could pose a threat: the Red River Delta, northwest Vietnam-upper Laos and southern Indochina. In Navarre's judgement, the Red River Delta was a strategically important area that could become the main front of our main force units; northwest Vietnam-upper Laos, although it was an area of mountainous jungle in which they were highly vulnerable, was also an area in which we could not launch large-scale, lengthy offensives because the treacherous mountainous jungles prevented us from resolving rear service and technical problems; in southern Indochina, our main forces were not large but their forces were even weaker (compared to the Red River Delta) and were, moreover, widely dispersed; it was only in the strategically important Central Highlands that our main force units could bring about a major reversal in battlefield position if they launched a large-scale offensive. On the basis of these judgements, Navarre adopted the following strategic guidelines: during the winter and spring of 1953 and 1954, it was necessary to avoid "full-scale combat" with our strategic, mobile main force units. In the North, they were going to launch a strategic offensive; in the South, they were going to occupy all remaining free areas, especially Interzone 5 and Hau Giang in Nam Bo. Every possible step would be taken to build up their mobile reserve forces, especially the strategic general reserve units. In the winter and spring of 1954 and 1955, once their mobile forces had become sufficiently strong and received the necessary training, all of their forces were going to be concentrated against our main force units on the northern battlefield in order to win a decisive victory.

Late in the summer of 1953, in keeping with these guidelines, the French colonialists reinforced their expeditionary forces with 12 battalions from France, North Africa and Korea. Navarre decided to withdraw his forces from Na San (the Northwest) and attempt to put together 84 mobile battalions. In the Red River Delta, they had 44 battalions, more than 50 percent of their mobile forces throughout Indochina. The Bao Dai lackey government issued a general mobilization "edict" and conscripted hundreds of thousands of youths to expand the puppet army.

In September, 1953, the Political Bureau of our Party Central Committee met to discuss war strategy for the winter and spring of 1953 and 1954. The conferees confirmed the correctness of the strategic guidelines set forth at the 4th Plenum of the Party Central Committee. The Political Bureau approved a war plan that essentially entailed the following: "At this time, the enemy

has highly concentrated their main force troops in order to do battle with us in the delta. The delta battlefield affords the enemy many advantages. A large attack by us in the delta can only bring us limited victories, cannot change the war situation and might wear down our main force units. Northwest Vietnam and Laos are areas in which the enemy is weak but which they cannot abandon. By sending our main force troops in that direction, even though we will encounter very large resupply difficulties, we will force the enemy to disperse their forces, kill vital forces of the enemy, intensify our activities on all battlefields behind enemy lines and create the conditions for eventually liberating the Red River Delta."(4)

Our party's adoption of these strategic guidelines for the 1953-1954 winter-spring strategic offensive once the people's war battlefield deployment had been firmly established was a very wise decision. It was also the basis of our strategy of stretching out the forces of the enemy in order to attack them, tying the enemy's hands in order to kill them, maintaining the initiative and attacking the enemy on the front and behind their lines and coordinating our attacks throughout the country and on the entire Indochina battlefield. Our most artful strategy was that of deceiving the enemy. We had to cause the enemy to misunderstand or misjudge our intentions and actions. While our strategic, mobile, main force divisions, such as the 308th, the 312th, the 304th and so forth were moving toward their battlefield positions or had taken up concealed positions from which to attack strategically important enemy positions in the northwest and central Laos, Navarre received intelligence information informing him that we intended to launch an offensive down in the Red River Delta. He decided to act first. He proclaimed: "This year, 1953, before they launch the opening campaign...I am telling you that we must move first, must act before the opposition does, must control the battlefield. Our slogan is to seize the initiative..."(5) They conducted dozens of savage sweep operations within the areas they occupied and launched a major offensive, the so called "Campaign Seagull," against our free areas in Ninh Binh and Thanh Hoa. However, they did not win one victory and more than a few of their forces were killed by our local forces, guerrilla militia and some main force units.

In November, 1953, when he received a new intelligence report informing him that some main force units of ours were moving toward Lai Chau (the northwest), that Vietnamese volunteer forces and the Lao People's Liberation Army were preparing to launch an offensive in central Laos and that our main force units in Interzone 5 were preparing for an attack on the Central Highlands, Navarre had no choice but to change his plan.

Our party provided leadership that correctly implemented the principles of military art: "Resourcefulness, flexibility, secrecy and surprise." We successfully employed the art of using decoy troops to deceive the enemy in many different ways: moving troops from one place to another in order to make the enemy think that we would attack from a different direction; appearing to be making preparations for combat and troop movements; disseminating false information, etc. However, it must also be realized that this success can only be achieved when this art is practiced within the battlefield deployment of a people's war, a just war. Because, the purpose of these deceptions was to carry out our plans for annihilating the enemy.

Our very best strategem was that of deceiving the enemy into sending their forces elsewhere, most importantly their strategic mobile forces. This evolved into a very highly developed art in the implementation of our strategic guidelines: we "avoided the strengths and attacked the weaknesses of the enemy's forces in order to spread them out, destroy their vital forces and expand our free areas."(6) This art involved using strategems to deceive the enemy, to force them to send their forces elsewhere and then taking advantage of the dangerous position in which they found themselves to launch surprise attacks wherever they were vulnerable or weak in order to destroy them or break their will; stretching out the enemy's forces and attacking them, "forcing the enemy to disperse their forces"(7) and attacking them at all places that they absolutely had to prevent from falling under our control, "places where the enemy was weak but which they could not abandon"(8), which we did under the guidelines: "activism, initiative, mobility and flexibility."(9) This was the distinguishing feature of the art of strategems and battlefield deployment as practiced by the party and President Ho in their military guidance. This art was based on the strategic and tactical guidance provided by the Political Bureau of our Party Central Committee:

"Destroy the vital forces of the enemy while building our forces;

Strike when assured of success, when assured of victory, strike to wipe out all enemy forces;

Select places to strike where the enemy is vulnerable, where the enemy is relatively weak;

Maintain the initiative and resolutely force the enemy to disperse their forces."(10)

In late January, 1954, in order to deceive the enemy, force them to send mobile forces to other battlefields, break up the concentrated deployment of the enemy's mobile main force units and create the conditions needed to prepare for the attack and assemble our forces at Dien Bien Phu, our army and the Lao People's Liberation Army launched an offensive in upper Laos to smash the Nam Hu River defense line, where the enemy intended to open a road running to Dien Bien Phu. Charging forth in the midst of victory, revolutionary forces liberated Phong Saly, thereby linking the resistance war base in Laos to northwest Vietnam. The enemy was immediately forced to send mobile forces to reinforce Luang Prabang, in the hope of preventing their battlefield position in upper Laos from collapsing. Meanwhile, in the Red River Delta, southern central Vietnam and Nam Bo, in support of operations on the main battlefields, local armed forces and main force units of the various military regions intensified the guerrilla war in a determined effort to strongly retaliate against the enemy's sweep operations and launch attacks deep within enemy territory under the guidelines of launching small-scale attacks in which victory was assured, wearing down the vital forces of the enemy, expanding guerrilla bases and coordinating with the entire battlefield. By February, 1954, the shape of the entire battlefield had changed compared to the autumn and winter of 1953. Our liberated areas had been expanded, the areas in between our liberated areas that were controlled by the enemy had been greatly

reduced in size and we occupied rather important positions, positions that were favorable for launching attacks. This situation proved that our battlefield deployment had become rather solid in all strategic areas. The Navarre plan had virtually been defeated. The contradictions between conducting mobile operations and occupying and holding land, between decentralization and centralization in their war of aggression became increasingly evident. The broken, shattered morale of the expeditionary forces and lackeys was the seed of unavoidable defeat. Abstract, subjective and underestimating the enemy in his thinking and relying upon technical weapons based on reactionary, bourgeois military doctrine, Navarre made one mistake after another. While his strategic mobile reserves were being stretched out by us all over Indochina and finding themselves in strategic defensive positions, Navarre continued to dream of a strategic offensive. At that time, joint Viet-Lao forces were launching strong attacks in central Laos and Navarre was forced to send a number of strategic units up there to deal with them but he still maintained that the purpose was to defend the Red River Delta and waited for us to attack Dien Bien Phu in order to wipe us out. Isolated, threatened and facing the danger of being annihilated, Navarre, instead of withdrawing his forces from Dien Bien Phu to defend the Red River Delta, decided to concentrate his mobile forces in five main areas in the shape of a "porcupine": Dien Bien Phu, the Red River Delta, Luang Prabang, Xeno and the Central Highlands. He intended to turn Dien Bien Phu into a huge "porcupine" to trap and then chew up our main force units. This was the deductive reasoning of a confused, frustrated man, was the strategem of an aggressor. We, on the other hand, applied the historical experience gained by our forefathers in fighting the enemy: "It is essential that we fight the enemy not only through the force of resistance, we must also practice the art of deception. We must either deceive them through our own methods or make them the victims of their methods of deception;...we must deceive them through their own methods and know when they are trying to deceive us..."(11) The enemy selected Dien Bien Phu as the place to which they would draw our main force units, pin them down, await a favorable opportunity for wiping our main force units out and then penetrate and reoccupy our strategic areas on the entire Indochina battlefield. As for ourselves, although we faced resupply difficulties in this area of mountainous jungles, it was basically a good area for us, one that was suited to our capabilities and style of fighting. Thus, the enemy's handling of the situation played right into our hands: the enemy sent forces to places where we were capable of attacking them, where our rear area was extensive and they were isolated.

In the logic of the force deployment on the entire battlefield, Dien Bien Phu became the site of the decisive strategic battle between ourselves and the enemy. In keeping with the directive issued by President Ho: "This campaign is a very important campaign, not only militarily, but politically as well, not only within our country, but internationally as well; therefore, the entire army and party must insure that it succeeds"(12), our strategic reserve forces were ordered to secretly move up and tightly encircle the enemy in Muong Thanh Valley (Dien Bien Phu). A strong spirit of determination to fight and win, to wipe out the enemy spread quickly throughout the army and among all the people. This spiritual strength truly became a material strength, especially after the remolding drive and agrarian reform. Our people in the free areas, in the newly liberated areas and in the areas behind enemy lines

mobilized manpower and materiel for the campaign. Our battlefield and rear service support preparations were carried out through the greatest effort ever made by us.

Content with the calculations represented by his long-range strategic plan, Navarre redoubled his effort to consolidate Dien Bien Phu into a very strong base complex. The generals and high ranking officials of the French and American governments, together with bourgeois military circles, were convinced of the "inviolability" of this fortress of strategic importance. Proclaiming that his hands were now free, Navarre immediately landed forces at Thuy Hoa and launched the At Lang campaign, which was a key element of his plan. Ignoring the boasts of the French and American generals and colonels, our forces continued to secretly encircle Dien Bien Phu and remained determined to destroy the entire base complex. To coordinate with the Dien Bien Phu battlefield, our forces launched strong attacks on all other battlefields. Navarre continued to be caught off guard: after decentralizing his forces by sending units into central Laos for a second time, he was caught off guard for a third time in southern Laos, a fourth time in the Central Highlands and a fifth time in upper Laos and forced to decentralize his forces and dispatch mobile units into these regions on each occasion. Our forces were also launching strong attacks in the Red River Delta. The enemy was pinned down everywhere. However, when he saw that our forces had stopped at Muong Xai and Luang Prabang, Navarre declared that "the offensive of the Viet Minh has peaked." He then launched the second phase of the At Lang campaign, landing troops at Quy Nhon. Another very decisive test of wits and strength took place between ourselves and the enemy, one characterized by very strenuous efforts on both sides. By then, our position on the battlefield was very good. Ours was the deeply entrenched posture of a well established people's war battlefield deployment, as a result of which we were able to carry out our stratagems to deceive the enemy and force them to send their forces elsewhere. We stretched the enemy's forces thin to attack them. We attacked them on the front through frontal assaults. We attacked them in the rear on fronts established behind enemy lines. We even attacked them on land controlled by us. Ours was a shrewd battlefield deployment based on solid, deeply entrenched positions. Our selection of Dien Bien Phu as the scene of the decisive strategic battle was a shrewd decision and came as quite a surprise to an enemy that was subjective, underestimated the opposition, relied upon technical weapons and employed stratagems to deceive us. But we also employed stratagems to deceive them. The test of strength and wits at Dien Bien Phu between ourselves and the enemy was very fierce. On 13 March, with the enemy having played into our hands and their mobile forces being stretched to all battlefields in Indochina, where they were tied down, suffering steady losses and unable to either rescue one another or save Dien Bien Phu, we decided to open fire on Dien Bien Phu. It was the largest coordinated campaign in the resistance against France. It demanded the use of the various forms and methods of fortress warfare and required the neutralization of numerous solid bases within the enemy's strong base complex. Under the guideline "strike and advance when assured of success," we employed the full force of coordination among the various branches to attack and occupy the Him Lam, Doc Lap and Ban Keo bases, which were some of the strongest bases of the enemy in the North and Northeast. With the loss of three centers of resistance that had provided important protection to the base complex, panic spread from Dien Bien Phu to

the enemy command posts in Hanoi and Saigon, sending the enemy a warning of their impending defeat. However, they still had over 10,000 troops and more than 3 dozen positions, the majority of which were concentrated in the open field. From that flat terrain, the enemy could employ the power of their artillery, tanks and aircraft. Under the wise, direct guidance of the Political Bureau, headed by the esteemed President Ho Chi Minh, and determined to surmount every difficulty, our forces quickly breached and deeply penetrated the positions on Hills A1, C1 and so forth while laying siege to each cluster of bases, isolating and occupying the air strip (the enemy's lifeline), isolating the southern portion of the complex from its center and tightly encircling enemy forces in a ring of fire from an ever tightening noose of hundreds of kilometers of trenches. By transporting heavy artillery and anti-aircraft guns across the treacherous terrain in order to move in on the enemy and achieve the efficiency of close range fighting, our artillery forces, although smaller, totally overwhelmed the enemy's artillery and tanks. This was a development that took the enemy completely by surprise, a development that they simply could not understand. Our artillery had emerged as a branch of its own with a unique, bold and resourceful style of fighting, that is, moving in close to the enemy and firing at them point blank. This style was so effective that even the enemy had to admit that 75 percent of their important positions and forces had been destroyed by our artillery fire power. The very creative and skillful tactics employed by our infantry, such as taking one small piece of land from the enemy at a time, directing sniper fire at the enemy, forcing themselves in between enemy forces and closing in on them heightened the enemy's sense of desperation because the fire power and resupply and rescue capabilities of their air force had been rendered ineffective. In the face of this perilous situation, Navarre decided to order De Castries to open an escape route to the west. But it was already too late! Seizing the opportunity, we promptly mounted a fierce assault employing powerful units against the final defense system of the enemy while deeply penetrating enemy lines to their command post. On 7 May 1954, the "Determined To Fight and Win" banner of President Ho flew above the command post of Colonel De Castries and the entire staff and command, which consisted of 16 colonels and 353 officers ranging in rank from lieutenant colonel to 2nd lieutenant, were captured alive. Nearly 10,000 enemy troops jumped out of their foxholes, raised their hands and surrendered. We had concluded the Dien Bien Phu campaign with a very glorious victory.

The victory won in the winter and spring of 1953 and 1954, the pinnacle of which was Dien Bien Phu, eloquently proved that our party not only had correct lines and policies, but had also reached a very high level of development in its employment of revolutionary military science and art, which included the art of strategems and battlefield deployment.

With this strategic skill, our indomitable and unyielding nation will forever be an independent and free nation living within a powerful socialist country.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ho Chi Minh: "Tuyen tap,"[Selected Works], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1980, Volume I, p 403.

2. Ibid., p 548.
3. Ibid., p 551.
4. "Lich su Quan doi nhan dan Viet-nam,"[The History of the Vietnam People's Army], Quan Doi Nhan Dan Publishing House, Hanoi, 1974, pp 530 and 531.
5. Navarre: " The Agony of Indochina," Plon Publishing House, Paris, 1957, the Department of Historical Research, the Political General Department, p 161.
6. "The History of the Vietnam People's Army," Quan Doi Nhan Dan Publishing House, Hanoi, 1974, p 511.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., p 532.
10. Ibid., p 533.
11. "Binh thu yeu luoc,"[Basic Military Manual], Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi, 1970, p 143.
12. "The History of the Vietnam People's Army," p 557.

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THE VICTORY OF DIEN BIEN PHU, THE RESULT OF THE COMBINED STRENGTH OF THE ENTIRE COUNTRY

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[Article by Nguyen Huu Dao and Nguyen Huu Hop]

[Text] Knowing how to create and highly employ the combined strength of the entire country were one of the secrets in the victory of the 1953-1954 winter-spring strategic campaign and the strategic battle of Dien Bien Phu. The combined strength of the entire country, of all the people in battle resulted in glorious victory over the aggression of the French colonialists, who were assisted by the U.S. imperialists, crushed the enemy's greatest war effort and brought the resistance against France to glorious victory.

In mid-1953, under the military plan drafted and adopted by Navarre, the French colonialists, assisted by the U.S. imperialists, embraced large and very perfidious ambitions. Under the Navarre plan, Dien Bien Phu was considered to be a trap where they could pin down and wipe out our large main force units, as a result of which the enemy's hands would be free to carry out their plan to attack and occupy Interzone 5, which was the main element in their strategic plan for the winter and spring of 1953 and 1954. If French forces won victory at Dien Bien Phu, they planned to spread out from there and reclaim the areas they had lost in the Northwest. Finally, they were going to launch a large-scale offensive northward from the Red River Delta and southward from the Northwest to encircle and wipe out our main force troops, thereby winning a decisive victory.

The Dien Bien Phu base complex became the newest, most highly developed and strongest form of response under the enemy's strategic plan. The battle of Dien Bien Phu became an extremely large and decisive challenge to our nation in its war of resistance against the French colonialist aggressors.

In September, 1953, the Political Bureau of our Party Central Committee met and decided our war strategy for the winter and spring of 1953 and 1954. The military strategy of the Central Committee was:

a) Making every effort to intensify the guerrilla war on all battlefields behind enemy lines, not only in Bac Bo, but also in Trung Bo, Nam Bo and the

Lao-Cambodia battlefields in order to thwart the enemy's rear area pacification plan, thwart their plan to expand the puppet army, decentralize their main forces and defeat their plan to concentrate their forces in Bac Bo.

b) Main force troops were to firmly adhere to the guideline "activism, initiative, mobility and flexibility" and concentrate their infantry forces in order to wipe out vital forces of the enemy and attempt to liberate land in strategically important areas in which the enemy was relatively weak while making every effort to kill vital enemy forces in the course of combat in areas attacked by the enemy in which conditions are favorable for us to wipe them out."(1)

The Party Central Committee promptly issued a directive to the armed forces and people on "the distant battlefields (Binh Tri Thien, Interzone 5 and Nam Bo) to do everything possible permitted by conditions and capabilities to divide the forces of the enemy and prevent them from assembling to attack the free areas of Interzone 3 and Interzone 4."(2)

In keeping with these decisions by the party, our army and people intensified their activities on all battlefields of Indochina, attacked the enemy continuously and won very large victories.

As a result of the strong, continuous attacks by our armed forces coordinated with our political forces on all battlefields and in all strategic areas, on the main front as well as within the areas behind enemy lines, the Navarre plan was dealt an important defeat shortly after it was put into effect. The conventional war on the main front was closely coordinated with the guerrilla war in the enemy's rear: the Bac Bo, Trung Bo, Nam Bo and all other battlefields throughout Indochina smoothly coordinated their activities. Guerrilla warfare, mobile warfare and fortress warfare evolved. The killing of vital enemy forces was closely linked to liberating land and seizing control. The strength of this coordination in the face of the turning point in the war of resistance created favorable circumstances for the party in its leadership and guidance of the war: it ordered the preparation of rear areas and other preparations for combat in order to win decisive victory in the decisive, strategic battle of our army and people at Dien Bien Phu.

The combined strength of the entire country, the strength of the entire nation in battle not only created a very effective battlefield deployment from the perspective of strategy, resulted in increasingly high combat efficiency and insured the close and effective coordination of all battlefields and forces, but also created basic conditions of decisive importance in resolving the very large difficulties encountered with rear services and rear service support in the Dien Bien Phu campaign.

Once the strategic decision had been made to annihilate the enemy at Dien Bien Phu, supplying and resupplying grain and ammunition and providing communications and transportation support to the large, main force units fighting far from their rear base, so far that it took a long time to reach them, became a very large difficulty. Overcoming this obstacle was an important guarantee of the victory of the campaign. The enemy could not understand how the army and people of our entire country overcame so many

seemingly unsurmountable difficulties, provided rear service and mobilized the strength of the rear area for the campaign. The enemy maintained that, with its underdeveloped rear service potentials and limited means and supply capabilities, our army could not win victory by means of large, main force units fighting on a battlefield that was far from its rear area, especially when the campaign became prolonged. However, on 13 March 1954, the attack on the base complex of the enemy at Dien Bien Phu began, taking the enemy by surprise.

In the fall and winter of 1953, in major attacks by our forces on the various battlefields and important strategic fronts, very large amounts of manpower and materiel of the people were mobilized, thereby insuring victory over the enemy in a series of campaigns that were either carried out at the same time or in succession. However, because we relied upon the manpower and materiel of the entire country, our reserves were still abundant and we were still prepared for new battles. When the Dien Bien Phu campaign began, the entire country sent manpower and materiel to the main battlefield.

In November, 1953, the Dien Bien Phu campaign rear area was put in operation. At first, in accordance with the 1954 spring combat plan presented by the Central Military Party Committee to the Political Bureau on 6 December 1953, the number of persons participating in the campaign was projected as 42,570 (35,000 of whom would be soldiers from various units) with about 14,500 corvee laborers being sent from many different localities in the country and mobilized locally. With these projected forces and with the campaign projected to last about 45 days, supplying food, ammunition, equipment and so forth for the campaign became a very large mission, one that could not be completed all at once. The question of mobilizing the greatest possible strength of all the people and the entire country was soon raised. The 1954 spring combat plan stated: "The Finance and Equipment Supply Council and the zones must concentrate their forces on making preparations, must urgently promote the road plan and the manpower and materiel mobilization plan." (3) Later, the number of persons participating in the campaign grew, consequently, relying upon the strength of the entire country and all the people to provide rear service support and mobilize the rear area became an even larger and more urgent need. On 25 January 1954, we changed our guideline from "strike and win victory quickly" to "strike and advance surely." This meant that the following difficulties could be encountered in rear service and combat support:

- Supplies could run short;
- Troops could be worn down and become exhausted;
- The enemy could be reinforced. (4)

These difficulties demanded that the entire country, our entire nation develop, mobilize and know how to get more from the strength of each force everywhere by employing every measure and method possible and displaying initiative, creativity and tenacity in keeping with the party's spirit of self-reliance. Having been taken by surprise by our strategy, our rear service support and our mobilization of the rear area, the enemy found themselves in the position of not knowing what to do, of having to defend

against us and suffering a major defeat, still without realizing how it was possible.

The first phase of the assault by our forces on the Dien Bien Phu complex was not carried out without new difficulties arising in the effort to mobilize the combined strength of the entire country for battle and support the campaign. Then, "the mobilization of manpower and materiel in the rear had to be carried out with true intensity and many cadres had to be dispatched to provide urgent and constant supervision and inspection as this was the only way to achieve the objective of maintaining the minimal level of support for our troops... Only in this way could our troops maintain the needed stamina and be able to fight continuously."(5)

Following the second phase of the assault on Dien Bien Phu, clearly recognizing our victories and capabilities and fully aware of our difficulties in supply and combat operations, the Political Bureau of our Party Central Committee said in a resolution: "All the people, the entire party and government will surely give all that they have to reinforce the Dien Bien Phu campaign and surely do everything necessary to win total victory for the campaign."(6) Thus, in the process of preparing for as well as in the evolution of the Dien Bien Phu campaign, highly mobilizing the combined strength of the entire country was a vital strategic issue of decisive significance in winning victory.

This mobilization of the strength of the entire country for that strategic, decisive battle first of all required that the rear area be strengthened and solidified in every respect.

Before we began the campaign, we had large free areas and solid rear areas of the people's war throughout the country. Viet Bac, which consisted of six provinces, had a population of hundreds of thousands and was the operating center of the resistance war leadership apparatus of the entire country, became the main base of the resistance following the border victory in October, 1950. Whenever our forces launched a major campaign in Bac Bo, compatriots in the free areas of the Viet Bac Interzone always participated, to one degree or another, in combat support and combat operations. In 1953 the enemy conducted 1,429 sweep operations; however, the free areas of the Viet Bac Interzone were not only maintained, they also supplied to the midland and coastal provinces more than 10,000 buffalo and cattle for use in production. The free areas in Interzone 4 and Interzone 5 were continuously expanded. These were sources of much manpower and materiel for the Dien Bien Phu campaign. The guerrilla areas and guerrilla bases within the occupied areas from Bac Bo to Nam Bo continued to be maintained and expanded. The newly liberated areas in the Northwest and the Central Highlands were linked to the free areas of the Viet Bac Interzone, Interzones 3, 4 and 5 and even Interzone 9 (Nam Bo), thus establishing a firm foothold for the armed forces and posing a major threat to the enemy. With this large and solid rear area, we were able to mobilize support from many places for each battlefield, not only in the rural areas of the mountainous jungles, but even in the rural areas of the lowlands, areas behind enemy lines and even within the cities, the final strongholds of the enemy.

Carrying out production well in the rear area and providing good combat support on the frontlines, the Vietnamese working class sent more than 70,500 boats and carts to support the campaign; in addition, workers constructed more than 1,000 large and small bridges and more than 2,000 kilometers of roads for motor vehicles.

The more than 261,453 corvee laborers who were mobilized in the rural areas bravely remained on roads, transporting food, ammunition and medicine. On the frontline itself, compatriots of Dien Bien Phu District supplied 3,000 persons who worked a total of 646,700 mandays supporting the campaign. Deserving of attention is that the enemy occupied areas in Bac Bo sent some 200,000 tons of paddy and contributed 7.5 million mandays to support the Dien Bien Phu campaign.

In rear service support, Vietnamese women made tremendous contributions. The "Association of Soldiers' Mothers," which had a membership of some 5 million mothers, enthusiastically resupplied and cared for troops. Women contributed 2,381,000 work days in support of the campaign (which equalled nearly 50 percent of the total number of mandays that were worked to support the Dien Bien Phu campaign).

The ethnic minorities also made considerable contributions. In the four districts of Tuan Giao, Dien Bien, Quynh Nhai and Thuan Chau, they contributed 7,500 tons of rice, nearly 390 tons of meat and so forth.

From our rear areas (the rear area of the entire country and the local rear areas), the manpower and fighting strength of an entire nation flowed into the battle. The number of youths volunteering for the army increased with each passing day. More than 25,000 recruits were sent to the front, thereby increasing our fighting strength and bringing the total number of troops participating in the fighting at Dien Bien Phu to 58,830.

The combined strength of the entire country was also increased by the various drives to reduce land rents and taxes and carry out agrarian reform. By the end of 1983, the revolutionary government had distributed 927,000 hectares of cropland of all types to peasant families that lacked land. The struggle by peasants against landowners in the countryside blended with the fight by the soldiers on the front, inspiring them to enthusiastically fight and win victory over the French. The victory of agrarian reform strengthened the alliance of workers and peasants, the revolutionary government, the United National Front and the People's Army. The forces of resistance of the entire country quickly reached a high level of development.

As a result of the combined strength of the entire nation, the strength of all the people in battle, our army and people were still able to launch attacks on all coordinated battlefields while the Dien Bien Phu campaign was underway.

In Interzone 5, we continuously threatened Route 13. On 21 March, our forces struck Pleiku City, killing more than 500 enemy troops. In Binh Tri Thien, we overturned dozens of military vessels of the enemy. In Nam Bo, many enemy launches and motorized boats were sunk in the rivers. In the Red River Delta, battles were virtually constant along the important roads. Many enemy ships

transporting weapons to resupply their forces at Dien Bien Phu became backed up in the port of Haiphong.

Relying upon the highly developed local people's war and with the assistance and inspiration provided by the repeated victories at Dien Bien Phu, main force troops and guerrilla militia took the initiative and launched a series of attacks that killed a relatively large number of vital enemy forces in the battles of Rang Thong, Tham Thuong, Di Su and Dong Bien in Bac Bo, Tuy Binh and Anh Khe in Interzone 5, An Hoa in Binh Tri Thien, An Bien in Nam Bo and so forth, forcing the enemy to decentralize their forces and reduce their support of Dien Bien Phu.

Continuously attacked at many different places, the majority of the enemy's troops had to pull back to defensive positions in a vain attempt to keep their forces intact. However, our people's war had reached a high level of development and enemy positions were tightly encircled. Enemy troops in thousands of garrisons and posts lacked food and water and were afflicted with many diseases. Our proselyting efforts among puppet troops had yielded good results, having persuaded 3,200 of them to surrender or join the resistance.

Supported by the conventional war being waged by our main force troops and the people's war on the local level, the political struggle of the masses within occupied areas was intensified. The struggles by workers, students, intellectuals, the poor and women against cuts in their wages, against taxes, against exploitation, against forced labor, against conscription, for the release of their husbands and sons and so forth caused panic and chaos among the enemy. The high intensity of the political struggle created the conditions for the increasing development of the guerrilla war. Bold, flexible raids by us against enemy command posts, airports, ammunition depots and so forth inflicted many heavy losses upon the enemy.

Through the combined strength of the entire country, of all the people in battle, we wiped out 21 well trained enemy battalions at Dien Bien Phu, brought about a leap forward of decisive significance in our people's war of resistance and pushed French expeditionary forces into a situation in which they could do nothing to help themselves and suffered defeats.

Having come up against the combined strength of our entire country, of all our people under the correct and wise leadership of our party, the French imperialists suffered a shameful defeat in our country.

In the 1953-1954 winter-spring strategic offensive, the pinnacle of which was the Dien Bien Phu campaign, the combined strength of our entire country was the result of many different factors. Above everything else, it originated in the strength of the correct and creative revolutionary line of our party. This line was the foundation of each correct strategy and tactic employed in the full-scale, national war of resistance and provided our people with a guideline for building and using their strength to win victory over the enemy. The combined strength of the entire country was the strength of all the people in battle, of the entire country fighting the enemy. On the basis of this strength, our people waged a full-scale military, political, economic and cultural war of resistance. This combined strength also helped to find a

successful, excellent solution to a new and very important problem that had arisen: how could a small nation with an underdeveloped economy win victory in a war of aggression waged by large imperialist countries with larger populations, a higher level of economic development, powerful economic and military might and armies that were not only larger than ours, but were also equipped with modern weapons and technical equipment.

The combined strength of our entire country was based on the just nature of our war of resistance and our party's correct line. This correct line of our party tapped and multiplied the capabilities of the entire nation and each Vietnamese and highly organized and mobilized each potential within the country. Under the party's correct line, the strength of our entire country was mobilized to win victory over the enemy.

The victory of Dien Bien Phu has proven that the combined strength of the people of our entire country is invincible; by mobilizing this combined strength, we will surely win victory over each enemy that commits aggression against our country.

FOOTNOTES

1. See: "Bao cao ve ke hoach tac chien va tong ket kinh nghiem trong cac chien dich lon,"[The Report on the Combat Plans and a Review of Experiences Gained in the Major Campaigns], published by the General Staff, Volume III, pp 13,14.
2. "Van kien Dang 1945-1954,"[Party Documents, 1945-1954], published by the Department of Research on Party History of the Central Committee, Hanoi, 1980, Volume IV, Book 2, p 205.
3. "Nhung tai lieu chi dao cac chien dich cua Trung uong Dang, Tong quan uy va bo tong tu lenh,"[Campaign Guidance Materials of the Party Central Committee, the Central Military Party Committee and the High Command], published by the General Staff, 1963, Volume VI, p 41.
4. See: "The Report on the Combat Plans....," Volume III, pp 59-60.
5. "Campaign Guidance Materials....," Volume VI, pp 139-140.
6. "Party Documents, 1945-1954," Volume IV, Book 2, p 467.

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DIEN BIEN PHU, A LESSON IN VICTORY

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 5, May 84 pp 25-30, 35

[Article by Hong Quang]

[Text] The victory of Dien Bien Phu was a victory of tremendous historic significance, a victory of a profound epochal nature. During the past 30 years, that glorious feat of arms has been deeply ingrained in the heart and mind of the each Vietnamese and will "forever be a source of legitimate pride to our nation and a source of strong inspiration to the people of the entire world." (1) During the past 30 years, our friends throughout the world have observed, studied and admired the feat of arms recorded at Dien Bien Phu, considering it to be a symbol of the power of diligent, progressive mankind arising to throw off the yoke of slavery, oppression and exploitation of imperialism to win independence and freedom.

Evaluating the victory of the 1945-1954 war of resistance against France, the pinnacle of which was the victory of Dien Bien Phu, President Ho Chi Minh wrote:

"For the first time in history, a small, weak colony won victory over a powerful colonialist country. It was a glorious victory for the Vietnamese and, at the same time, a victory for the forces of peace, democracy and socialism in the world." (2)

For the enemy, Dien Bien Phu was associated with panic and became a bitter lesson for the French colonialists and even the U.S. imperialists. The defeat at Dien Bien Phu not only caused the foundation of French imperialism to collapse, but also thwarted a strategic intention of the U.S. imperialists concerning the three countries of Indochina, the intention to turn the Red River Delta into a line preventing the spread of communism. The defeat of France and the United States at Dien Bien Phu was an unavoidable defeat. In that final hour, France spent itself dry and the United States provided France with the highest level of support ever but could not save France from defeat. Nearly one-third of the total French force was killed in the winter-spring strategic offensive and the Dien Bien Phu campaign, thus facing the French army with the danger of being totally wiped out. President Ho said: The

victory of "Dien Bien Phu was a painful defeat for the French colonialists, and also a shameful defeat for the U.S. interventionists."(3)

In the nearly one-third century that has passed, countless politicians, military leaders and scholars in France and the world have described, commented upon and tried to understand how the French army could have been defeated at Dien Bien Phu. Many books and newspaper articles have described how circumstances unfolded there and acknowledged a number of facts. However, either because of a lack of understanding or the class viewpoint of the author, these books and articles have not dealt with the facts of basic importance. They have not determined the underlying cause of the defeat, that is, have failed to learn the proper lesson.

In contrast to France and the United States, the Vietnamese, led by an experienced and wise revolutionary vanguard unit, learned the lessons in victory, the lessons in the nature of laws of the war of resistance against France, the highpoint of which was Dien Bien Phu. Upon that foundation, our people dared to engage in a new fight and win unprecedented, brilliant victory in the war of resistance against the United States for national salvation, the highpoint of which was the general offensive and uprising in the spring of 1975.

The most important lesson learned by our people was the lesson of waging a full-scale war of resistance fought by all the people.

For awhile, the French colonialists also employed every available force in their war of aggression. However, the nature of their war of aggression, although full scale, prevented them from mobilizing all the people to participate in the war.

The underlying cause of the defeat of France was that the war was fought for the selfish interests of a small number of French monopolistic bourgeoisie. France, drained of its resources and plunged into misery by the war of aggression waged by the fascist Hitler, now had to bear the burden of a new war, an unjust war that was a further drain on its resources and brought even greater misery. This was why the people of France called it a "filthy war." The French government found itself isolated. Although it had a large population, had a modern industry and was a capitalist power in the world, France could not mobilize the entire citizenry and wealth of France for the war. The French expeditionary army in Indochina was a professional army but it was always lacking in troop strength, always lacking in means of war and suffered a steady drop in its fighting morale. Unable to mobilize armed forces, France could not carry out its strategy to win victory quickly and was forced to painfully drag out a war of aggression from which there was no escape. Strategically speaking, their defeat in the war began once it became necessary to fight a protracted war of aggression. Lacking the necessary troop strength, France was forced to conscript native troops. This reduced the quality of the French expeditionary forces. The French colonialists called this the "yellow-izing" of the army and it became the constant concern of French army commanders and the French government. Because they lacked the necessary troop strength and means of war, the French were forced to fight and negotiate with us at the same time "they signed the 6 March 1946 Accord" in a

vain attempt to gain time and await an opportunity to put their new plan of aggression into effect. Also because of their shortage of troops and means of war, the French were forced to beg for aid from the United States. France realized that this was no different than "drinking poison to alleviate thirst," but it was poison that France was forced to drink. France knew that if it continued to rely upon the United States, the United States would sooner or later kick France out of Indochina but there was no other way that it could maintain the honor of a "power."

The above mentioned fatal weaknesses of France led France to defeat.

The weaknesses of the French colonialists were the fundamental strengths of our people. Our strength originated in the precise line that had been adopted concerning the war of resistance. Waging a full-scale war of resistance fought by all the people was the fundamental line of our party in the resistance against France. This line gave the first directive issued by the party, on 22 December 1945, when launching the nationwide war of resistance its name: the resistance war fought by all the people directive.

The line on a full-scale war of resistance fought by all the people was, at the same time, the fundamental law in the resistance against France. With all the people participating in the resistance, the war of resistance would inevitably be fought in all fields: military, political, economic, cultural, diplomatic and enemy proselyting. All the people fought the enemy using all types of weapons and fought in all fields, in all localities, under all kinds of conditions and in every possible environment.

Our party's wise and skillful line on a full-scale war of resistance fought by all the people mobilized the people of the entire country to arise and fight the enemy, mobilized the entire country for battle. President Ho Chi Minh's stirring slogan "Each citizen is a soldier, each village is a fortress" reflected the unshakeable determination and tapped the potential strengths of our nation throughout the resistance against France. Under this slogan, all patriotic Vietnamese became soldiers, every locality evolved into a burial ground for enemy forces. "People were fighting the enemy in each region of the country, fighting the enemy wherever they were."(4)

Why did our entire country go into battle? It was because the new system had brought the right of ownership to the people, because the party pursued a correct line, one consistent with the aspirations of all the people, consistent with the laws of history and because the party's corps of cadres was proficient in military science and art, knew how to organize and lead the people in the fight against the enemy and established appropriate modes of warfare. The war of resistance against France that our people fought was a war of liberation for the independence and freedom of the entire nation. Independence and freedom had been the aspiration, the *raison d'être* of our people for thousands of generations. Fighting for the independence and freedom of the fatherland was and continues to be a precious tradition of our nation. Our party and President Ho Chi Minh developed upon this precious tradition and raised it to the level of the new age. Therefore, when they heard the fatherland's sacred appeal that "those who have guns must use their guns, those who have swords must use their swords, those who do not have

swords must use shovels, hoes and sticks"(5), wave after wave of men and women, old and young alike, left their homes and eagerly went into battle. "From white haired old folks to very young children, from compatriots overseas to compatriots in the occupied areas, from the people in the mountains to the people in the delta, everyone possesses ardent patriotism and hates the enemy. From the soldiers out on the front who go without food for several days so that they can cling to the enemy and kill them to the officials in the rear who are eating less so that more can be provided to support our troops; from the women who encourage their husbands and sons to join the army and themselves volunteer for transport duty to the mothers of soldiers who lovingly care for our troops as if they were their own children; from the men and women workers and peasants who are trying to outdo one another and produce more and do not mind working hard to make their contribution to the resistance to the landowners who have given cropland to the government--all of these noble actions, although different in terms of where they occur, are identical in the ardent patriotism they exhibit."(6)

The line on waging a full-scale war of resistance fought by all the people also involved establishing combined forces that were larger than those of the enemy in order to win victory. This became a law in the entire war of national liberation. The law of a full-scale war of resistance fought by all the people was based on two fundamental prerequisites: first, our people had won the right to be the masters of the country as a result of the victory of the August Revolution. Secondly, the resistance was led by a seasoned and staunch Marxist-Leninist party that pursued the correct line, had a strong organization and had a corps of cadres who clung to their positions, clung to the people, clung to the enemy and knew how to organize and mobilize forces and command combat operations.

The second lesson learned by our people was the need to fight the enemy while building our forces.

The victory of Dien Bien Phu was the victory of the combined strength of the people of our entire country. However, the combined strength that created Dien Bien Phu manifested itself in the form of military strength. The victory of the 9 year war of resistance against France, the pinnacle of which was the victory of Dien Bien Phu, proved that the military strength of our people was manifested in the strength of the armed forces themselves and in the strength on which the armed forces depended. This was the strength of the rear area, a strength that was a constant factor in determining our victory in the war.

Everyone from the leaders of the French government to the commanders on the various echelons of the French expeditionary army, including highly regarded American and British advisors, maintained that the Dien Bien Phu base complex was invincible, was an indestructible fortress. Their confidence was so great that they feared that we would no longer attack them, feared that they would not have an opportunity to wipe us out, consequently, they distributed leaflets challenging us to a fight. What caused the French leaders and commanders to feel such blind confidence? One important reason was their overly high evaluation of their own forces and equipment and their failure to see the weaknesses in the resupply capabilities of their rear area. They underestimated our forces and our manpower and materiel reserves: "We will

not have to use more than two divisions or mobilize more than 20,000 corvee laborers." They did not understand the strength of the rear area as it underwent agrarian reform, the strength of an organized rear area that possessed an unshakeable determination to fight and win.

In keeping with the decision by the Political Bureau that "all forces be mobilized to support the Dien Bien Phu campaign" and under the correct and creative leadership provided by the various party committee echelons, a powerful rear area came into being from the free areas of Viet Bac, Interzone 3, Interzone 4 and the newly liberated areas of the Northwest to the guerrilla base and guerrilla areas of the Red River Delta, a rear area that poured manpower and materiel into the Dien Bien Phu front. This rear area supported not two divisions, but eight, mobilized not 20,000, but more than 260,000 corvee laborers and provided support not for 2 months, but for nearly 8 months (from 1 December 1953 to 20 July 1954). Such a powerful rear area could never have been mobilized by the French expeditionary army.

The strength of our rear area originated in our party's profound awareness and full utilization of the role played by the rear area, by the new system in the war. This awareness was crystallized in the line on waging the war of resistance while building the country. "The resistance must be carried out in conjunction with building the country. Only by winning victory in the resistance can we successfully build the country. Only through sure success in the building of the country can the resistance win victory." (7) Carrying out the resistance at the same time as national construction meant fighting while building. This was the law of development in the war of resistance against France.

The realities of the resistance proved that building the rear area meant building resistance forces in every respect, that is, building the new system. Our party and state enacted policies to reduce land rents, reduce taxes and carry out agrarian reform in the free areas. This showed peasants that the new system was truly a system of laborers. It markedly increased the strength of the rear area and became a strong force propelling the resistance to victory. The results of the cultural, educational and public health policies of our party and state intensified our people's devotion to the new system and made them even more determined to defend it to the end.

Fighting while building was also evident in the fact that our people built their combat forces while engaging in combat and quickly increased the fighting strength of the revolutionary armed forces from only being able to launch small and medium-scale attacks to launching large-scale attacks and becoming stronger with each battle. This was the law that applied in the buildup of the armed forces in the resistance against the French. This law emerged against the background of the war of resistance beginning at a time when we had no conventional armed forces. The process of fighting while building our forces was maintained throughout the course of the resistance, from the time that it broke out until it concluded. Before they began the 1953-1954 winter-spring strategic offensive, our forces were consolidated, supplemented with fresh troops, weapons and ammunition, trained in how to attack a base complex and their political standard was raised. And, even in the course of the winter-spring strategic offensive and the Dien Bien Phu

campaign, our forces continued to be consolidated and strengthened. We were always gaining experience in military art and supplementing and developing upon what we had learned to suit the situation on the battlefield. In April, prior to the full-scale assault to destroy the Dien Bien Phu base complex, the Political Bureau and the Central Military Party Committee ordered a phase of political activities designed to further strengthen the determination of troops to fight and win and correct the causes of some weariness, hesitancy, rightism and negative thinking that had been noticed. As a result, all cadres, soldiers and corvee laborers were "determined to fulfill their mission, mindless of the hardships and bitterness"(8) on the Dien Bien Phu front and all the other battlefields in the country.

Both the morale and the material strength of our army were built. As a result, although smaller than the enemy in terms of total troop strength and inferior to the enemy in terms of weapons and means of war, our army's fighting strength was much more effective than the enemy's.

The third lesson in victory learned by our people was the need to employ appropriate, creative modes of war.

The Dien Bien Phu campaign occurred amidst circumstances in which our forces were not superior or equal to those of the enemy in several respects. Through the most strenuous of efforts, with fresh troops sent from France and with the strongest possible encouragement and assistance from the United States, Navarre had managed to build strategic mobile forces and a total troop strength that were superior to ours. At Dien Bien Phu, the French had built a permanent base complex, one very many times stronger than the Na San base complex, a complex which the French called "Na San to the 10th power." With this advantage, Navarre felt certain that he would regain the initiative and enable the French government to go to the negotiating table as victors. Yet, why was the aggressor army never able to seize the initiative? Why, from the time he arrived until the end, was Navarre unable to win even one "victory" under his plan, unable to create the military conditions needed to lay the foundation for an honorable political solution, unable to "prove to the Viet Minh that...they had no hope of winning a military victory"?(9)

The answer to these questions, in addition to lying in the unjust nature of the war of aggression, also lies in the fact that they did not know how to utilize appropriate modes of warfare.

In his book "The Agony of Indochina," Navarre constantly blamed the French government for not having a clear political policy and not providing the expeditionary army with a full supply of troops, weapons and means of war. However, even Navarre did not dare deny a weakness of the army under his command, namely, its outmoded, cumbersome, inflexible and passive style of warfare that placed heavy emphasis upon assuming defensive positions. The commanding general of the French expeditionary army openly admitted: "The Viet Minh always rejected classical warfare and forced the French to adopt its form of warfare... The style of fighting of the Viet Minh was a well adapted style that reflected the mobility, flexibility, initiative, surprise and high combat efficiency of guerrilla warfare."(10)

As for ourselves, under the leadership of the party, our people and army vigorously employed their greatest strengths and sent the combined strength of the entire country into battle. On this basis, we developed suitable methods of fighting. Always attaching importance to the guideline of displaying activism and initiative in attacking the enemy, displaying mobility and flexibility in every situation, we seized and created opportunities, looked for the enemy's greatest weaknesses in order to attack them and create a superior strength to win victory over the enemy in each battle. We dispersed enemy forces, thereby reducing them to forces which, although large, were not strong; we rendered them passive when they wanted to take the initiative, forced them on the defensive when they wanted to take the offensive and pinned them down when they wanted to move. We attacked them at one place to force them to withdraw to another position; we struck and advanced surely and did not strike if victory was not assured.

In the 1953-1954 winter-spring strategic offensive and the Dien Bien Phu campaign, our army and people attacked the enemy on each battlefield. The conventional war fought by our main force corps was closely and smoothly coordinated with the guerrilla war fought by local troops, guerrilla militia and the people behind enemy lines. All three elements of the military launched strong attacks on all battlefields of Bac Bo, Trung Bo and Nam Bo. Our people and army closely coordinated with the friendly people's and armies on the battlefields of Kampuchea and Laos. Military attacks were closely coordinated with the political struggle in the areas behind enemy lines and uprisings to bring down the puppet government, resist conscription, demand peace and demand the return of husbands and sons, which shattered the puppet army and government and protected the property and lives of the people. Our people's resistance was closely coordinated with the movement among the people of the world to safeguard peace and oppose war, especially the movement among the French against the war of aggression of the French colonialists in Indochina. Military attacks were closely coordinated with diplomatic attacks to crush the enemy's will to continue the aggression.

The lessons learned from the victory won at Dien Bien Phu were applied and highly developed upon in the resistance against the United States and led to the glorious victory in the spring of 1975, the total liberation of the South, the reunification of the country and the start of the advance by the entire country toward socialism. The lessons of Dien Bien Phu and the lessons of the spring of 1975 contributed to the feat of arms we recorded by defeating the two wars of aggression unleashed by the Chinese expansionists and hegemonists in 1979. All the lessons in victory learned during the 3 radiant years of 1954, 1975 and 1979 are integral factors of the science and art of leading a national liberation war and the war to defend the modern Vietnamese fatherland.

FOOTNOTES

1. Trung Chinh: "Chien tang Dien-bien-phu mai mai la niem tu hao cua dan toc Viet-nam," [The Victory of Dien Bien Phu Will Forever Be a Source of Pride to the Vietnamese], TAP CHI CONG SAN, No 6-1979, p 20.

2. Ho Chi Minh: "Vi do lap tu do, vi chu nghia xa hoi,"[For Independence and Freedom, for Socialism], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi 1970, p 213.
3. Ho Chi Minh: "Tuyen tap,"[Selected Works], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1980, Volume I, p 556.
4. Le Duan: "Speech at the 1st Congress of Delegates of the Lam Dong Provincial Fatherland Front," NHAN DAN Newspaper, 20 March 1984.
5. Ho Chi Minh: "Selected Works," Volume I, p 403.
6. Ibid., p 485.
7. Ho Chi Minh: "Nhưng lời kêu gọi,"[Appeals], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1956, Volume 1, p 50.
8. Ho Chi Minh: "Quan ta toan thang o Dien-bien-phu,"[Our Forces Have Won Total Victory at Dien Bien Phu], NHAN DAN Newspaper, 12 May 1954.
9. See: "So thao Lich su Dang cong san Viet-nam,"[Draft History of the Communist Party of Vietnam], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1982, Volume I, p 672.
10. Ibid., p 748.

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DIEN BIEN PHU: THE BLOW THAT MARKED THE START OF THE CRISIS OF U.S. MILITARY STRATEGY

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 5, May 84 pp 31-35

[Article by Nhuan Vu]

[Text] Prior to Dien Bien Phu, the clarion call of U.S. military strategy was "massive retaliation." The White House and Pentagon maintained that the U.S. Strategic Air Command armed with atomic bombs was an "all purpose club" in the hand of America, the "international gendarme."

Yet, in March and April of 1954, when the French expeditionary army units under the command of De Castries were under siege in the valley of Dien Bien Phu and facing the danger of being totally annihilated, the admirals and generals of the U.S. Joint Chiefs-of-Staff engaged in bitter debate in a vain attempt to come up with a feasible military plan for rescuing their French allies.

The Pentagon proposed a plan to land U.S. ground forces in the Red River Delta. In his book "Crisis Now," U.S. General James Gavin, the chief of the Combat Operations Department of the U.S. Joint Chiefs-of-Staff, wrote in 1954: "We projected the size of the force (for the landing in the Red River Delta) to be 8 combat divisions reinforced by 35 engineer battalions and all the artillery and rear service support required for such a huge force."

This plan was set aside, because, in early 1954, within the framework of the "massive retaliation" strategy, under which priority was given to the U.S. Strategic Air Command, U.S. ground forces were not ready to undertake a large-scale expedition in a region tens of thousands of kilometers from the United States. Moreover, it was clear that rushing a few battalions of U.S. Marine "firefighters" to Haiphong or Hanoi would not have much of an effect upon the fighting at Dien Bien Phu.

Another plan was proposed and considered: using the tactical aircraft on the U.S. air carrier in the Gulf of Tonkin to drop a few tactical atomic bombs on a number of areas in the mountains and jungles around Dien Bien Phu. Ignoring the extremely serious political consequences that the Washington government as well as the Paris government would have to bear as a result of this insane

action, speaking only in military terms, because of the close proximity of the two sides to each other and the way they were deployed on the battlefield, the units of the French colonialist army within the valley of Dien Bien Phu would surely be the first victims of any damage caused by U.S. atomic bombs.

There was a final plan that attracted brief interest: using 60 B 29's from Clark Air Base in the Philippines to drop a few thousand tons of bombs in successive waves on the area around Dien Bien Phu. This plan was approved and given the name "Operation Vulture."

However, General Ridgway, the Chief-of-Staff of the U.S. Army at that time, a man who had much practical experience in the use of U.S. strategic bombers in the Korean war, maintained that even if "Operation Vulture" could be carried out, indiscriminate bombings of the vast mountains and jungles could not lift the siege on De Castries' forces, whose plight at that time was one of "trapped animals."

It was truly a difficult problem. Later, the Chicago SUN-TIMES Newspaper, in its 17 June 1971 edition, described the sharp, intense debate among the U.S. Joint Chiefs-of-Staff over the plans for rescuing the French expeditionary army at Dien Bien Phu from its impending fate and concluded: "At the last moment, President Eisenhower cancelled the order for the attack after, it was reported, heeding the advice of General Ridgway, the Army Chief-of-Staff. The general had told him earlier that it would be necessary to send in several tens of thousands of U.S. troops (after the strategic bombings by the B 29's) in order to achieve successful military intervention."

Thus, the White House and the Pentagon, after dreaming up all sorts of "treasures that screamed 'deterrence,'" had to pull back their hands and, in the end, sit with their arms folded and watch the tragic fate of Colonel De Castries unfold. This was the first tragic sign of the impotence of U.S. military strategy and was the first crack in this strategy following World War II. U.S. General Taylor described this impotence in the imagery of "Uncertain Trumpet," which is the name of a book written by him that was published in the late 1950's in which he pressed his demand for the replacement of Eisenhower's "massive retaliation" strategy with the new strategy of "flexible response" that was proposed by Taylor and later was considered by the Kennedy and Johnson administrations to be the official military strategy of the United States.

It can be said that Dien Bien Phu was the first warning bell alerting U.S. strategic circles to the remarkable strength of the national liberation movement, which the U.S. imperialists had taken lightly prior to that time, and to the limits of "American power." It was also the first warning bell alerting the White House and the Pentagon to the power of the vanguard forces of the international liberation movement that had taken up arms against colonialism: the army and people of Vietnam. In the face of the painful defeats of French ground forces on the Indochina battlefield, in general, and at Dien Bien Phu, in particular, from late 1945 to the first months of 1954, some persons within U.S. strategic circles began to feel that if they became involved in an adventurous war in Vietnam, they would come up against a unique adversary whose capabilities they had not fully measured. This was precisely

why Eisenhower hesitated and then decided to draw back. Only a few days later, the units of the French expeditionary army at Dien Bien Phu surrendered. The U.S. president, himself the former commander-in-chief of the allied army on the western front against nationalist Germany, could take comfort in the fact that he had made the correct decision even though, in subsequent years, Eisenhower and the three U.S. presidents that succeeded him, Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon, displayed no understanding whatsoever of the French colonialists' final lesson in Vietnam, which was also the U.S. imperialists' first lesson in Vietnam.

At the time of the Dien Bien Phu campaign, a number of persons in the White House and the Pentagon saw that the United States lacked some of the conditions needed for direct and effective military intervention in Indochina but they did not understand the background against which the times were set or realize the power of the three revolutionary currents in the world, in general, or the combined strength of the army and people of Vietnam, in particular. They believed that the powerlessness of American military might in the face of Dien Bien Phu had its origins in the rigidity of the "massive retaliation" strategy and the inappropriate organizational structure of the U.S. Army due to defining the framework of military operations almost exclusively in terms of a direct confrontation with the Soviet Union and the socialist system while not giving appropriate attention to the national liberation movement. They blamed the "massive retaliation" military strategy of the Eisenhower administration and advanced the new strategy of "flexible response," considering it to be the key to regaining strategic initiative on a global scale. From then on, from Kennedy to Reagan, although the names of the military strategy of the United States have changed, its basic foundation has remained unchanged. It is America playing the role of international gendarme to "deter and stop" the three revolutionary currents, simultaneously attaching importance to both adversaries, the Soviet Union-socialist system and the national liberation movement, and actively preparing for a nuclear war while viewing "counter-insurgency wars" as a "present reality"; on the basis of these projections, they have attached importance to strengthening both their strategic nuclear forces as well as their conventional forces.

Thus, Washington drew back in the face of Dien Bien Phu to prepare for a few steps in a new direction. Later, Vietnam would be viewed by the U.S. imperialists as the testing ground of new U.S. military strategies, from "flexible response" during the Kennedy and Johnson years to "real deterrent" during the Nixon and Ford years. This time, some of the plans that were considered at the time of the Dien Bien Phu campaign were applied on a large scale using much more modern and copious means of war. Instead of the 8 army divisions and 35 supporting engineer battalions planned by James Gavin back in 1954, 525,000 regular U.S. troops were present in South Vietnam in 1968. However, the large, powerful U.S. expeditionary army was defeated on the battlefield of South Vietnam, the first defeat in the history of the United States. Instead of the 60 B 29's at Clark Air Base in the Philippines planned for "Operation Vulture," the U.S. Strategic Air Command used approximately 200 B 52 Super Fortresses flying from Okinawa and even from Utapao Air Base in Thailand to conduct massive campaign bombing raids over a long period of time on the territory of Vietnam, the highpoint of which was the Linebacker II campaign against Hanoi and Haiphong during the final days of 1972. However,

having escalated the war to its highest level, Nixon was dealt his most painful defeat by a "Dien Bien Phu in the sky" over North Vietnam.

Only one plan remained, the dropping of a nuclear bomb on North Vietnam. This plan was once placed on Nixon's desk. However, the U.S. president, whom Americans were calling the "executioner," a "modern day Hitler" and a "war criminal," also had to back away from the plan just as his predecessor Eisenhower did.

Having played every card and tried every measure and trick, they decided that "the best of the 36 track events is running." U.S. Ambassador Martin and U.S. advisors selected the course of evacuation, an evacuation that was carried out during the final days of April, 1975. In actuality, Dien Bien Phu was the first blow in the process that led to the great victory by the army and people of Vietnam in the spring of 1975 that concluded the fate of U.S. neo-colonialism in South Vietnam. It was also a heavy blow to U.S. neo-colonialism throughout the world.

From the two milestones of Dien Bien Phu in 1954 and the great victory of the spring of 1975, the first cracks in the "massive retaliation" strategy of the United States have gradually spread with the defeats of the United States in Vietnam and at many other places in the world to the new strategies of the United States, such as "flexible response" during the 1960's, "real deterrent" during the 1970's and "direct confrontation" during the early years of the 1980's.

The "Dien Bien Phu complex," the "Saigon, April, 1975 complex" and the "Vietnam syndrome," in general, have become the "chronic preoccupation" of the officials of the White House and Pentagon each time they entertain thoughts of sending U.S. military forces to intervene somewhere, as in the case of Iran, Ethiopia and Angola in recent years and Nicaragua and El Salvador today.

Whenever the reactionary, pro-U.S. powers ruling the countries mentioned above have faced the danger of collapse, bitter controversies have swirled within Washington ruling circles over how best to rescue them. The officials in the White House and Pentagon keep going back to the plans that were proposed at the time of the Dien Bien Phu campaign and put into effect in the U.S. war of aggression in Vietnam.

In the end, still tortured and tormented by the "Vietnam syndrome," the hottest heads in the White House and Pentagon cool down and dare go no further than indirect intervention.

In the final months of 1983 and early 1984, President Reagan, in an attempt to bring the United States into the "post-'post-Vietnam'" era, sent the U.S. Army to invade the tiny island of Grenada in the Caribbean Sea close to the shores of the United States and landed 1,500 U.S. Marines in Lebanon. For awhile, U.S. strategic circles expressed their delight that a light had been found at the end of the U.S. strategic tunnel. However, in Grenada, the United States became "bogged down politically" after encountering strong resistance from that country's army, an army no larger than a battalion. In Lebanon, during the final days of February, 1984, Reagan was forced to order the withdrawal of

the 1,500 U.S. Marines to the warships of the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea. The Western press called this a tragic "flight." The light at the end of the tunnel was nothing more than an illusion.

From May, 1954 to May, 1984, 30 years have passed. Yet, the "Dien Bien Phu imprint" upon U.S. military strategy is still clear; the U.S. "call to battle" is still muffled and uncertain and will never again be the clear, crisp call of the late 1940's and early 1950's. Although the "Dien Bien Phu wound" was an "indirect wound" to U.S. military strategists, its scar has remained for many decades.

The "Dien Bien Phu experience" revealed the fundamental weaknesses of U.S. military might, U.S. military strategy and U.S. imperialism itself in the period of its decline. It also signalled the start of the powerful attack by the three revolutionary currents in the world, the solid base of which is the Soviet Union, the pillar of world peace, and the socialist community; marked the start of the strong and widespread development of the national liberation movement; and marked the emergence of a new balance of power in the world, one that is constantly shifting in the favor of the forces of revolution, democracy and progress.

U.S. ruling circles recognize the impact and influence of the "Dien Bien Phu experience" upon U.S. military strategy but they only see it as a phenomenon, they do not understand its essence. Over the past 30 years, obstinately pursuing their ambition to be the "international gendarme" and ignoring the background against which our times are set and the new balance of power in the world, one Washington administration after another has simply plunged headlong into arms races centered primarily around strengthening and improving their weapon systems in order to regain "military superiority" for the United States. This is also the foundation upon which they have forged one new military strategy after another.

Ironically, in the early months of 1984, the "call to battle" of the hotheads in the White House and Pentagon continues to be "muffled and uncertain" in Lebanon and even in El Salvador, small countries in which the iron hands in Washington thought their adversaries could be crushed in an instant. Three plans of action similar to the three plans for intervention during the time of the Dien Bien Phu campaign still lie on the desk of President Reagan. The Washington government continues to peer into a dark strategic tunnel and still see not the smallest ray of light at its end.

The lesson of Dien Bien Phu is still a modern day lesson for Reagan to ponder.

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LENIN ON VIETNAM AND INDOCHINA

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 5, May 84 pp 36-37

[Text] Editorial Note: in several of his works, V.I. Lenin discussed Vietnam and Indochina. To assist readers in their studies, we have printed some excerpts from the works of V.I. Lenin in which he discussed Vietnam and Indochina. These passages were collected and presented by Chuong Thau, M.A. in history.

In 1908, in an article entitled "The Tinderboxes on the World Political Scene," printed in PROLETARSKOYE DYELO Newspaper, No 33, on 23 July (that is, 5 August 1908), in a discussion of the strong development of the revolutionary movement in many countries of Europe and Asia and the insane response by the imperialist lackeys of the western colony, V.I. Lenin wrote the following concerning the situation in Indochina:

"A look at the attitude of the French in Indochina shows that this time some of those who have taken part in the plundering of the colony feel uneasy: they helped the 'historical government' of China suppress revolutionaries! They are also fraught with worry over keeping 'their' Asiatic colonies on the edge of China intact."

V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Progress Publishing House, Moscow, 1979, Volume 17, p 217.

In the spring of 1916, when writing the book "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," V.I. Lenin devoted many pages to debating Kautsky (one of the leaders of the German Social Democratic Party and the 2nd International, who later became a traitor to Marxism), included among which was the following passage related to the situation in the colonial region of Indochina:

"Indeed, it is enough to compare well known and indisputable facts to become convinced of the utter falsity of the prospects which Kautsky tries to conjure up before the German workers (and the workers of all lands). Let us consider India, Indochina and China. It is known that these three colonial and semi-colonial countries, with a population of 600 to 700 million, are subjected to the exploitation of the finance capital of several imperialist powers: Great

Britain, France, Japan, the United States, etc. Let us assume that these imperialist countries form alliances against one another in order to protect or enlarge their possessions, their interests and their spheres of influence in these Asiatic states. These alliances will be 'inter-imperialist' or 'ultra-imperialist' alliances."

V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Progress Publishing House, Moscow, 1980, Volume 27, p 528.

In July, 1916, in a newspaper article entitled "Summary of the Debate on the Right of Self-Determination," which was subsequently printed in SOTSIAL-DEMOKRAT Anthology Number 1, October, 1916 under the name N. Lenin, in a passage discussing the struggle of the oppressed peoples, the following was emphasized:

"Examined from the perspective of the movement of the oppressed peoples, what does the crisis bring to light? In the colonies, it has brought to light a number of rebellious plots which, of course, the oppressor countries--with the support of the military censorship board--have done their best to conceal. However, we still know that the British savagely suppressed a mutiny by their Indian troops in Singapore; that there have been rebellious plots in French controlled Annam (see: NOTRE VOIX) and in German controlled Camroon (see the Junius pamphlet); that in Europe, on the one hand, there is the Irish rebellion, which the 'freedom loving' British do not dare to resolve by imposing universal service upon the Irish and have, instead, employed the death penalty to restore order there; on the other hand, the Austrian government has executed representatives of the Samyar Czechs 'for the crime of treason' and executed an entire regiment of Czechs for the same 'crime.'"

V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Progress Publishing House, Moscow, 1981, Volume 30, pp 66-67.

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EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS CONCERNING BUILDING THE DISTRICTS AND STRENGTHENING THE DISTRICT LEVEL: THE BUILDING OF THE DISTRICTS AND STRENGTHENING OF THE DISTRICT LEVEL IN QUANG NAM-DA NANG PROVINCE

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 5, May 84 pp 38-44

[Article by Pham Duc Nam, chairman of the Quang Nam-Da Nang Provincial People's Committee]

[Text] The resolution of the 4th Party Congress, Directive 33 of the Political Bureau, Council of Ministers' Resolution 33/CP and the subsequent directives and resolutions of the Council of Ministers on building the districts and strengthening the district level have clearly shown the role and position of the district level "as the base for reorganizing production; organizing and distributing labor in a rational manner; coordinating agriculture with industry; coordinating production with distribution-circulation; transforming production relations in a manner closely linked to developing production; coordinating the economy with the national defense system; building the district into a comprehensive management and planning level that has its own budget, a level that manages production, manages circulation, supports the material and cultural lives of the people"... On the basis of this realization and against the background of a private, backward economy that was ravaged during the war and had nothing by way of material-technical bases, we have been simultaneously carrying out the establishment of the new production forces and the new production relations at installations and within the scope of the districts in our work of building the districts and strengthening the district level in Quang Nam-Da Nang Province.

We began by promptly carrying out economic planning and zoning within each district and throughout the province. To guide the building of the districts and planning, the province selected Duy Xuyen District as the site of a pilot project. One year later, we reviewed the experiences we had gained and on that basis, expanded the project to the other districts, completing the general planning of the 13 districts and cities and the general planning of the province in late 1979. Generally speaking, the general planning of the districts and the province is basically correct. On the basis of our planning, we formulated plans for restoring and developing the economy and carrying out cultural development within each district and throughout the

province. In keeping with their planning and on the basis of their potentials and strengths, the districts have reorganized production, redistributed their labor and implemented relatively comprehensive plan norms that represent a high rate of development, especially in agricultural production. Many districts have established a relatively well defined agro-industrial economic structure within the scope of the district.

During the past 7 years, our province has focused its efforts on building relatively well coordinated material-technical bases within the districts under the guideline "the state and the people working together, the province and the district working together."

To make full use of available time, the efforts of the entire province were put into building the large Phu Ninh water conservancy project and developing medium and small-scale farmland water conservancy networks throughout the districts, thereby developing water conservancy first and creating the conditions for cooperativization, gradual mechanization and the application of integrated technical measures in intensive cultivation and multicropping to raise crop yields. Today, the lowland districts have virtually completed the construction of water conservancy projects (the only work that remains is to improve the farmland water conservancy systems that provide irrigation and control of waterlogging in a number of areas). During the past 7 years, the province has constructed 42 large, medium and small reservoirs, included among which is the Phu Ninh reservoir which has a capacity of irrigating 23,000 hectares and is now being used to irrigate 17,000 hectares; 23 electric pump stations equipped with 195 1,000 cubic meter per hour pumps that irrigate 15,000 hectares; and 122 spillways, salt water retention dams and drainage sluices, nearly 2,400 pumps of all types, 20 wind-driven waterwheels in embankments and 135 seasonal dams that provide irrigation for 16,000 hectares of farmland. The total amount of farmland now under irrigation is nearly 50,000 hectares; computed in terms of the amount of area under cultivation each year, the area irrigated increased from 56,000 hectares in 1976 to 120,000 in 1982. A total of 201.5 million dong have been invested in water conservancy, with the central level investing 125 million dong in the Phu Ninh project and the locality investing 59 million dong; in addition, the people have invested 18 million dong and worked 31 million mandays. In coordination with building water conservancy projects, the province has constructed three small hydroelectric power stations in Vinh Trinh, Hoa Trung and Phu Ninh, one of which, the Phu Ninh hydroelectric power station, has a capacity of 2,000 KW. In particular, the Duy Son 2 Cooperative in Duy Xuyen District mobilized 6 million dong in investments by the cooperative and its members in the construction of a 540 KW hydroelectric power station, which was completed in late December, 1983. The Dai Quang Cooperative in Dai Loc District has mobilized 11 million dong for the construction of a cooperative hydroelectric power station. Tam Ky District has purchased 48 draw nets with 50 million dong in capital, borrowing only 7 million dong from the state, with the remainder being contributed by cooperative members and fishermen.

In conjunction with building water conservancy projects, the province has been implementing a policy of gradually equipping agriculture with technology and establishing tractor stations within each district to support land clearing operations and the preparation of fields and gradually put large tractors

under the management of cooperatives. We have built 67 machine repair facilities supporting agriculture and established a machine network within the scope of each district. We have also built stations and farms, such as seed production and livestock breeding farms, crop protection stations, agricultural supply stations, farmland water conservancy management stations, livestock feed processing plants and so forth, thereby establishing within the districts economic-technical centers supporting production.

The province completed the cooperativization of agriculture in its lowland and midland areas in October, 1979; in the mountains, cooperativization has yet to be completed. The province now has 254 agricultural production cooperatives with 106,036 hectares of farmland (92.2 percent of the province's farmland); these cooperatives have been joined by 184,082 farm families (96.8 percent of the total number of farm families), or a total of 919,817 persons in agriculture (96.6 percent of the persons in the countryside).

At the very outset, in order to help cooperatives establish the conditions needed to develop their production and business, in addition to the other investments made in agriculture, the province also made non-repayable investments in agricultural cooperatives amounting to tens of millions of dong in materials (10 cubic meters of lumber, 100 tons of lime, cement, bricks, tiles and so forth) for the construction of initial material bases; at the same time, many specific policies have been enacted, such as the policies on income from cropland and the collectivization of draft buffalo and cattle and farm implements, on fertilizer prices, on encouraging the development of the household economy and temporarily allowing cooperative members to borrow fertile land to raise crops in accordance with the planning of the cooperative and so forth. As a result of the constant development of agricultural production, the living standards of farmers have been improved, more and more products have been contributed under obligations to the state each year, material-technical bases have been strengthened and welfare projects, such as schools, hospitals, child care centers, kindergartens, wired radio networks and so forth, have been constructed within each village and cooperative; the face of the countryside is gradually being changed. After the Secretariat issued Directive 100, the locality studied and successfully implemented product contracts with groups of laborers and individual laborers. In the 2 years that the new management system has been in effect, the cooperativization movement has been further strengthened, the number of weak and deficient cooperatives has gradually declined and many cooperatives have improved themselves and met the requirement of closely linking their plans to organization and management, strengthening the material bases of the cooperative, supporting the daily lives of cooperative members and tapping the initiative of cooperative members in production.

On the basis of building water conservancy projects and cooperativization, our province has rapidly introduced scientific-technological advances in fields. The entire province has replaced the old system of rice varieties with a system of new, short-term, high yield varieties, on the basis of which we have restructured the seasonal schedule, increased the production of spring-summer rice (from 5,000 hectares in 1976 to 20,000 hectares in 1983) and turned the spring-summer season into a stable, main production season that produces a higher yield than either the winter-spring or summer-fall seasons while

increasing the amount of land used to raise three rice crops per year. Many cooperatives have established units that specialize in the production of level II seed rice in order to supply good seed to the cooperative and the district. The hog herd has begun to be improved and increases have been recorded in both the number of hogs being raised and hog market weight. Such integrated technical measures as maintaining the plowing and transplanting schedule, correctly preparing seed, cultivation and fertilization, pest and disease prevention and control, irrigation-drainage and the other technical standards have been widely popularized within the villages, cooperatives and production units. Generally speaking, the scientific-technological revolution has been closely combined with the production relations revolution within agriculture, as a result of which the province's annual rice yield and output have risen at a rapid rate. In 1983, 130 cooperatives within the province recorded average yields ranging from 8 to 20 tons, with the Dai Phuoc Cooperative, the province's leader in intensive cultivation, recording an average rice yield for the year of 21.6 tons in three rice seasons. Dien Ban District achieved an average, district-wide yield of 11.5 tons per hectare in 1982 (1982: 11 tons). Dai Loc District has led the province in rice yields for 2 years in a row: 12 tons per hectare per year. Duy Xuyen District is another district that has recorded an average yield in excess of 10 tons per hectare per year.

Through the results of the cooperativization movement, the districts have gradually carried out the reorganization of production, reorganized and redistributed their labor, developed the sectors and trades and closely linked agriculture to industry at the very outset, at installations and within the scope of the district.

Many districts have established specialized farming areas, such as high yield rice areas and areas raising industrial and export crops. Many have organized small industry and handicraft production installations or handicraft trades within agricultural cooperatives (236 agricultural cooperatives operated trade businesses producing goods worth a total of 40 million dong). At the Duy Phuoc Cooperative, the products produced by the trades were worth 1.92 million dong in 1981, 30 percent of total output value, and 3.3 million dong in 1982. Compared to 1980, the value of the products produced by the trades at cooperatives increased by 34 percent in Dien Ban District, 23 percent in Hoa Vang District and 20 percent in Dai Loc District. At many cooperatives within the province, the crop production sector has declined from accounting for the vast majority of total output value when cooperatives were first established to now only a little more than 70 percent, and only 65 percent in some districts (Hoa Vang, Dien Ban and Duy Xuyen). Livestock production and the other trades have increased significantly and the labor engaged in crop production has declined from the vast majority of the labor at cooperatives to 76 percent. At the advanced cooperatives, the labor engaged in crop production only accounts for 65 percent of the labor force. As a result, many districts have established a relatively stable agro-industrial (or agro-forestry-industrial) economic structure. In 1982, six districts were recognized by the province as rapidly developing agro-industrial districts, especially the two districts of Dien Ban and Hoa Vang, which are considered model agro-industrial districts of the province.

In order to enable the districts to take the initiative in meeting the norms of their socio-economic plans, the province adopted the policy of starting to assign management responsibilities to the districts, under which the finance sector completed the assignment of budget management responsibilities to the districts at a relatively early date. This has had a practical impact upon the development and acceleration of budget revenues and the fulfillment of obligations to the state. In 1982, four districts had balanced district budgets. The provincial Export-Import Federated Corporation assigned comprehensive management responsibilities to the districts and set up district export corporations under the direct management of the district people's committee. It has allocated capital and invested in the construction of initial material bases for the districts and provided them with guidance in organizing the production and procurement of export goods, exporting products in order to import supplies and raw materials for use in production and everyday life, etc.

To build the districts and establish a strong, solid district level, in addition to the requirements mentioned above, it is of decisive importance to build strong and solid basic organizations of the party, make party building the center of efforts and closely link the building of installations to the building of the district. Only by building strong installations do the conditions exist for building strong, solid districts; conversely, only strong districts are capable of guiding and assisting the building of installations. In recent years, especially since 1980, on the basis of this viewpoint, our province has adopted many policies and plans for building and strengthening the party organizations at installations in conjunction with building the district party organizations. The province dedicated 1980 and 1981 as 2 years of building the party (the focus of which was building the party at installations) by many different methods: promoting ideological and organizational work; carrying out the issuance of party membership cards; accepting new members into the party; strengthening the various party committee echelons from the installation to the provincial levels; carrying out cadre planning and training; strengthening the government and mass organizations; and launching socialist emulation movements among the various strata of the people in order to implement the norms of the state plan within the locality. Today, through self-reliance and with appropriate, selective and timely investments and assistance from the province, many basic organizations of the party have been solidified and further strengthened and the number of weak, deficient basic organizations has markedly declined, from 25 percent in 1980 to only 8 percent now. The number of strong, solid basic organizations of the party has increased from 17.6 percent in 1980 to 34.4 percent in 1983. Many district party organizations have been recognized as strong and solid district party organizations.

In recent years, our province, clearly aware of the role and position of the district level, has raised the matter of building the districts and strengthening the district level in a relatively appropriate manner, adopted many suitable policies and measures, established suitable stages of development and provided relatively close and well coordinated guidance. Therefore, although there are still differences among the districts in one area or another and although certain weaknesses still exist, generally speaking, all districts within the province have made progress and the

district level, which has gradually been solidified and strengthened, has assumed the tasks of leading and managing the economy, managing society, supporting the material and cultural lives of the people and performing security and national defense work while organizing the successful implementation of the positions and policies of the party and government.

As we build the districts and strengthen the district level, besides the initial results and advances mentioned above, we still have many shortcomings that we must make many efforts to correct in order to insure the steady and strong development of the districts.

The potentials that lie in our arable land, labor, trades, existing material-technical bases and so forth have not been appropriately developed. The organization of production and the organization of the administrative staff are not closely linked. The management of arable land is still lax. There are still many shortcomings in the development of the sandy soil zone and the mountain zone. In a few districts, production has been developing slowly and has even stagnated and declined in some respects (industrial crops, subsidiary food crops, small industry and the handicraft trades). Some districts are only completing a low percentage of their primary targets on grain and food product production, the production of raw materials for industry, the production of consumer and export goods and the fulfillment of obligations to the state. The mountain districts are encountering many difficulties and their production is not developing strongly.

The movement on the basic level is not uniform. Besides the advanced installations and production units that are the leaders of the province or the district, there is still a number of weak production units and installations within each district. Numerous service businesses have not been strengthened. There are still many problems among production and business units within the districts that have not been resolved.

One problem that stands out is that management responsibilities for installations have not been assigned in a well coordinated or timely manner by the central level to the province or by the province to the districts (and there is still much that is inefficient regarding those units that have been assigned management responsibilities). The organization of production and business and related policies (especially the policies that apply to distribution-circulation, such as those regarding capital, profits, prices, the supply of goods and so forth) have not been defined in a detailed, comprehensive manner, as a result of which efforts to utilize the relations among the units and different segments of the economy within the district have been thwarted and the conditions have not been established for the district level to truly take the initiative in resolving those problems that lie within the scope of its authority and tasks. The relations between the district and the province and economic-technical sectors are not rational, have not been specifically defined in terms of the different position and nature of the district and district level, have not been coordinated from the lower level to the upper level, from the upper level to the lower level and so forth.

Our largest difficulty at this point in time, a difficulty which is also one of the most important causes limiting the results that we have achieved in the

building of the districts and the strengthening of the district level, stems from the organization of our apparatus. The corps of district level and installation cadres is still weak and cannot meet the requirements of immediate tasks. Some district party committees, although strengthened during the second round of the congresses, are not truly strong and their leadership, organizational and management skills are still weak. The apparatus of the government, the mass organizations and the economic organizations on the district level are neither solid nor strong. The organizations of the party at installations (villages, cooperatives, stores, stations, farms and so forth) are still weak, there are still many weak, deficient basic organizations, the number of exemplary, vanguard party members is still small and their abilities are limited. The structure of the corps of cadres has not been planned in a comprehensive manner and cadres have not been deployed, assigned tasks or given supplementary training based on the new functions and tasks and the economic structure of the district. In many districts, the management, technical and professional skills of cadres are weak and, at a couple of places, there are still deviations from the principles and regulations governing economic and financial management. In particular, the apparatus of the mountain districts are still very weak and are unable to successfully perform their tasks.

There has yet to be a strong change in the view toward or the awareness of the role and position of the district level and the task of building the districts and strengthening the district level on the part of some sectors within the province. We have failed to provide close and well coordinated leadership and guidance of the building of the districts.

In 1984, our province will focus its efforts on accelerating the building of the districts and the strengthening of the district level, considering these efforts to be a strategic policy of the party, to be one of the main tasks in stimulating the growth of the sectors, localities and the entire economy, thereby helping to meet and exceed all targets and norms of the plan adopted by the province. The requirement of building strong and solid district party organizations in conjunction with building pure, solid and strong basic organizations of the party at installations will be the backbone, the nucleus of and the force behind the building of the districts and the strengthening of the district level. Our province's targets are to bring all districts to a new, comprehensive stage of development so that there are no weak and deficient districts by the end of 1984 and 50 percent of the districts (6-7 districts) become solid and strong districts by the end of 1985.

In 1984, in order to meet these targets, the province will send cadres to guide and assist those districts that have not completed the work of re-evaluating and supplementing their general planning and the planning of the sectors within the district. In addition to meeting the general targets established by the province on grain and food production, the districts will make a concerted effort to develop their strengths, quickly introduce technological advances in production and produce an increasingly large output of agricultural products and commodities. Once we have completed the work of supplementing general planning and sector planning within the districts, we will instruct the districts in how to guide the production installations in formulating their planning.

The province will guide the districts in the formulation of their plans for 1984, establish the targets for 1985 and closely manage the implementation of plans during each month and quarter. Efforts will be made to improve the formulation of plans within the districts in the spirit of democratizing the plan, fully upholding the right of the district and installations to assume responsibility on their own and enabling them to display initiative. The plan of the district must be formulated and put together from the installation upward (from the production units, cooperatives, stations and farms upward). The district must make an effort to establish the balances needed to meet the requirements of production and everyday life through the four different sources of supplies: supplies produced by the district; supplies acquired through cooperation and economic ties with other localities; supplies acquired through export and imports; and supplies provided by the upper level.

The province will also continue to guide the districts in doing a good job of strengthening cooperatives and reorganizing the production forces of the district and installations under the guidelines of establishing general businesses; closely linking agriculture to industry, small industry and the handicraft trades, to the forest industry and ocean fishing; closely linking production to distribution-circulation; establishing ties among the different segments of the economy, among the districts within the province, between the districts and the central sectors and other provinces and so forth; building and strengthening the material-technical bases of each sector within the district; and establishing and strengthening economic-technical centers within each area in order to competently support production and everyday life.

We will study ways to resolve policy problems, especially with regard to the policies governing distribution and circulation. Immediate efforts will be focused on studying ways to resolve a number of problems regarding capital, profits, the various types of funds and so forth in order to help the commerce corporations and grain corporations of the districts operate effectively. We will gradually put installations of the province under the management of the districts and help the districts manage them well.

Our province will implement, in a well coordinated manner, Secretariat Directive 24 on building solid, strong district party organizations in conjunction with building the districts and strengthening the district level and will focus its efforts on helping the districts strengthen the organizations of the party at installations, carry out cadre planning and training, strengthen the organization of the apparatus on the district level and improve the quality of the leadership and guidance provided by the district party committee and the district people's committee, thereby insuring that the requirement of building solid and strong districts is met.

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THE BUILDING OF AN AGRO-FORESTRY-INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 5, May 84 pp 44-48

[Article by Luong Duy Anh, secretary of the Dien Khanh District Party Committee]

[Text] Dien Khanh, a district in Phu Khanh Province, measures 167,270 hectares, 117,000 hectares of which are land on which forestry can be practiced. The district has only 10,585 hectares of agricultural land and 25,480 hectares on which agriculture and forestry can be combined. The district has a population of 112,172 (which includes 12,000 minority members), 51,851 of whom are laborers.

I. The Development of an Agro-Forestry-Industrial Economy Within the District

In agricultural production, agricultural cooperativization was virtually completed in 20 villages in the space of only 4 years after liberation day through the establishment of 24 agricultural production cooperatives.

In conjunction with cooperativization, appropriate importance has been attached to the construction of water conservancy projects. Twenty electric pump stations, two diesel pump stations, five reservoirs and two spillways have been built, thus providing irrigation water for more than 90 percent of the land under the cultivation of rice. Seventeen of the district's 26 villages have low voltage power projects supporting agricultural and industrial production. The district has built two 12 KW hydroelectric power stations and established a veterinary network extending from the district all the way down to installations.

In recent years, in addition to practicing intensive cultivation and multicropping, the district has organized and guided the clearing of land for the establishment of three new villages and two new economic zones in order to provide six densely populated villages with second installations measuring hundreds of hectares for the production of subsidiary food crops and exported industrial crops and the raising of herd cattle. In these areas, increasing attention has been given to coordinating agriculture and forestry. For example, in Dien Xuan Village, in addition to planting cassava, the people

have also planted dozens of hectares of sugarcane and nearly 300 hectares of cashews on hillsides to coordinate agriculture and forestry.

In the six mountain villages, which were bases of the revolution in the two wars of resistance, the living conditions of the ethnic minorities have been stabilized and gradually improved through the settlement of nomads. The mountain villages have had surplus grain to sell to the state ever since 1980. The destruction of forests due to slash and burn cultivation has gradually been curbed. Importance has been attached to building wet rice fields and clearing flat land for the production of grain. Besides organizing the protection and development of various types of raw materials (such as dwarf bamboo, talipot palm and giant bamboo) and producing handicraft art products for exportation, the ethnic minorities have begun to plant cashews and gradually restore vegetation to areas that were once stripped of their vegetation through slash and burn cultivation. Recently, the district conducted a pilot project to gain experience in Khanh Phu Village: although the village only consists of 250 families, some 1,200 persons, the people of Khanh Phu have planted more than 100 hectares of cashews and restored 50 hectares of land to the cultivation of castor oil beans for exportation, thus curbing the destruction of the forests.

Forestry production has gradually increased from virtually nothing following liberation day to the point where it now accounts for a considerable portion of the district's economy. In 1982, forestry output equalled 10.3 percent of the value of the district's total output.

Dien Khanh is a district that has relatively large forest resources, with timber reserves estimated at 8 million cubic meters. In 1982, the district harvested 12,000 cubic meters of timber (1.5 times more than in 1980) and 500,000 pieces of large bamboo (three times more than in 1980); in addition, it annually harvests more than 1,000 tons of talipot palm and 400 tons of dwarf bamboo for the production of exported handicraft art products, thus enabling it to meet the needs of the district and supply some products to Nha Trang City. Attention has been given to organizing the harvesting of special products and pharmaceuticals for exportation. The products allocated for exportation alone annually amount to more than 1 million dong.

Afforestation and the planting of trees to cover bare ground and barren hills have begun to yield a number of initial results and are rapidly spreading as a result of the introduction of cashews as a main crop on hillsides. In 1982, we planted 698 hectares of whole forests, which included 340 hectares of cashews and 10 hectares of black senna, and planted 100,000 trees at various sites. In 1983, we planted about 1,500 hectares of cashews.

In industry, small industry and the handicraft trades, the district directly manages four state-operated enterprises (including one state-operated timber site) as well as 15 cooperative teams and 10 cooperatives in specialized businesses.

State-operated forces have undertaken the entire processing of timber at two mills that have a capacity of 11,000 cubic meters per year and some of the

refining of sugar at a granulated sugar mill that has a capacity of 300 tons per year.

The production of the cooperative teams and cooperatives is very diverse. In addition to producing bricks, tiles and lime for capital construction, these units also make many products for industry, consumers and exportation.

a) The mechanical engineering and machine repair group is capable of casting iron and brass (especially statues), producing hand farm implements, improved carts, complete iron plows, sugarcane presses, pans for refining sugar, steam driven pumps and dwarf bamboo cutting machines and performing medium repair work on all types of motor vehicles and agricultural machines.

b) As regards consumer goods, these units produce 1,000 tons of paper pulp, mimeograph paper and hard book covers per year; 4 million thread spools per year; 20,000 bicycle and motorcycle tires per year; 500,000 pieces of pottery per year; 2,000 tons of brown sugar per year; and more than 500 tons of granulated sugar per year.

c) As regards exports, they produce 20,000 square meters of dyed bamboo blinds per year and 50,000 square meters of woven rattan and talipot palm mats per year.

In 1980, the value of the total output of industry, small industry and the handicraft trades was 8.818 million dong; this figure rose to 13.826 million dong in 1982 and more than 15 million dong in 1983.

The handicraft exported art product sector, although newly organized and not strongly developed, has tripled its production each year and accounted for 25 percent of the total value of the district's exports in 1983. In addition to two professional cooperatives, eight of the 24 agricultural cooperatives have set up specialized units and employ their idle agricultural labor in the production of handicraft art products for exportation.

The apparatus in charge of export-import activities, although newly established and only assigned management responsibilities in October, 1981, is operating well and has made practical contributions to supporting production and everyday life. Exports increased from 5.4 million dong in 1981 to 12 million dong in 1983. As a result of its exports, the district has been able to import hundreds of additional tons of nitrogen fertilizer and cement and more than 20,000 meters of cloth of all types each year to support production and the daily lives of the district's people.

The above mentioned results that have been achieved in economic development, although only initial results, are low compared to the potentials of our arable land, forests and labor and other conditions and compared to the requirements we face in improving the living conditions of the people and making our contributions to building and defending the country; however, these results have opened the way for building an agro-forestry-industrial economic structure within the district.

II. Building the District and Strengthening the District Level in Accordance with the Plan and Planning for Building an Agro-Forestry-Industrial Economic Structure

Having gained a thorough understanding of the resolution of the 5th Party Congress on building the districts and strengthening the district level and reorganizing production and improving management within agriculture, forestry and industry in order to fully develop the potentials of the locality, our district has been making every effort to strongly develop agriculture and move it one step closer to large-scale socialist production in order to perform the following three tasks well: producing grain and food products for society; supplying agricultural raw materials to industry; and creating large sources of export goods.

The most important measure here is promoting intensive cultivation and multicropping on all existing farmland. We have established a high yield rice growing area measuring 2,800 hectares. Planned, selective land clearing has been carried out and new land areas have been established to raise subsidiary food crops and exported industrial crops and coordinate agriculture and forestry on hillsides.

One crop of beans (soybeans or green beans) is being raised between the two rice crops to improve the soil and produce exports. On one rice crop fields, a second rice crop will be introduced at places where water conservancy projects can be constructed; at places where this is difficult, one rice crop and one subsidiary food crop will be raised. Our targets for 1985 are to produce 44,000 tons of grain and establish centralized, specialized farming areas for sugarcane (2,000 hectares), castor oil plants (500 hectares), citronella (500 hectares), beans (1,000 hectares), tobacco (200 hectares) and cashews (3,000 hectares) to provide a full supply of raw materials to processing enterprises and for exportation; at the same time, efforts will be made to organize the planting of 100 hectares of cotton and 100 hectares of mulberries to help resolve the clothing problem and provide 5 square meters of cloth per capita per year.

We will apply scientific and technological achievements, especially in biology, in crop and livestock production, considering this to be one of the fundamental elements of foremost importance of the scientific-technological revolution within agriculture. To begin with, we will improve and introduce new varieties in the production of rice, subsidiary food crops and industrial crops and new breeds in livestock and poultry production.

We will continue to observe and guide the allocation of crops based on an efficient system of rotation cultivation and companion cropping. Positive steps will be taken to provide a good supply of breeding stock and feed, with attention to feed rich in protein and vitamins, and veterinary drugs for hogs and chickens. State farms, forestry sites, cooperatives, cooperative member families and especially the persons in the mountains will be encouraged to develop livestock production and increase the number of hogs being raised from 16,000 in 1983 to 23,600 in 1985 and the number of buffalo and cattle being raised from 8,000 to 12,000 in 1985.

While developing production, we will continue to improve the management capabilities of cooperatives, make improvements to product contracts and strengthen the socialist production relations in the countryside. We will work hard to insure that there are no weak and deficient cooperatives in the lowlands and that the organizing of agro-forestry cooperatives and production collectives in ethnic areas is completed by 1985.

In forestry production, although we have begun to assign management responsibilities for land and forests, forest conservation and the forestry business have not been organized or guided well. The failure to allocate labor for forestry within each cooperative as well as on a district-wide basis has impeded our effort to protect and develop these precious resources in order to help develop the local economy and fulfill obligations to the state. The guideline that has been established by the district regarding forestry production is to efficiently organize production in general businesses on the basis of maintaining and increasing forest resources and redistributing labor. In addition to making good use of the local labor force, the district will provide additional labor to the forestry sector so that at least 10 percent of the labor within the district is working in the forestry industry.

We will do a better job of carrying out the settlement of nomads and reorganizing production among the minorities in the mountains in order to stop the destruction of the forests to make fields. We will instruct the ethnic minorities in how to care for, protect and harvest existing forest resources to make handicraft art products for exportation (2,500 hectares of talipot palm forests, 2,000 hectares of giant bamboo forests and 500 hectares of dwarf bamboo) and have them gradually plant cashews to cover their old upland fields.

Attention will be given to protecting, harvesting and gradually planting new trees for export products (Helicteres and cardamom seed) and resolving some of the difficulties being encountered with supplies and fuel for the forestry industry and improving the living conditions of forestry workers through exports and imports.

We will promote the assignment of land and forests to cooperatives and provide them with guidance in organizing their production and businesses in a manner consistent with the general policy of the district so that the destruction of the forests does not continue once forests have been put under their management. Together with the province, the district will invest in the construction of material-technical bases for the forestry sector, especially the opening of roads into remote areas of rich forests, thereby avoiding the problem of depleting easily harvested areas of forests and impeding the natural regrowth of forests. An effort will be made to harvest more than 20,000 cubic meters of timber in 1985.

With the products of its agriculture and forestry and its existing natural resources plus the basic advantages afforded by its sources of electric power, Dien Khanh has the conditions needed to rapidly and steadily develop its industry, small industry and handicraft trades, especially the industry processing and producing export goods.

To lay the ground work for developing the economy and raising the standard of living in the mountains to the level that has been achieved in the lowlands, Dien Khanh is making every effort to build medium and small-scale hydroelectric power projects in addition to continuing to use electricity provided by the national power network. Two of these projects, the 1,000 KW Giang Bay hydroelectric power project in Khanh Phu Village and the 2,000 KW Giang River hydroelectric power project in Khanh Minh Village, are key projects. Our goal is to provide electricity for production and everyday life throughout the district by 1990.

As regards machine production, we will organize a district machine and repair station and machine centers within the economic-technical clusters (established as joint businesses by the agricultural cooperatives) to produce a full supply of common and improved farm implements and repair virtually all types of machines and vehicles used in agriculture, forestry and industry.

As regards the processing industry, we will, in the 2 years 1984 and 1985, enlarge the sugar mill from its present capacity of 30 tons to 100 tons of sugarcane per day. Two new mills will be constructed in Dien Xuan and Dien Tho, which will have a capacity of 30 to 50 tons per day, and the production of the cooperative teams and cooperatives will be rationally restructured so that they can operate as satellites, as subcontractors for the state-operated processing industry, thereby avoiding the problem of units competing over raw materials, concealing some of the product they produce and disrupting the market.

We will develop the paper sector and increase pulp production capacity in order to provide a full supply of raw materials for the production of mimeograph paper, hard book covers and glossy, two-sided writing paper. Paper output will be increased to 2,000 tons per year and we will provide a full supply of thread spools to the Nha Trang Thread Mill (from 8 to 10 million spools per year).

The district will establish control over the milling of all lumber, undertake the contract milling of floor planks for the central level and expand the production of civilian carpentry products from standard lumber, firewood and the branches and tips of trees in order to meet the needs of the people.

We will strongly develop the production of civilian earthenware and pottery and gradually begin producing and exporting ornamental, earthenware art products.

We will maintain the output of harvested and processed rubber and adopt plans for expanding the amount of area under the cultivation of rubber and making technological improvements in production in order to fully meet, in terms of both quantity and quality, the need of the local people for bicycle and motorcycle tires.

As regards exported, handicraft art products, such as dyed bamboo blinds, talipot palm mats and woven rattan and bamboo products, in addition to continuing to employ additional labor in the town and densely populated villages in centralized production, it is also necessary for us to widely

develop this production, especially among manual workers, civil servants, students and the idle labor at agricultural cooperatives. We plan to have two-thirds of the agricultural cooperatives participating in the production of exported handicraft products by the end of 1985, thereby raising the output of these products to 10 million dong. The industrial, small industry and handicraft sector is making an effort to employ 40 percent of the district's labor and produce 45 percent of the total value of the district's output.

Exports-imports are an important lever in stimulating the development of agriculture, forestry and industry. In 1986, by allocating crops and arranging the sectors and trades in the ways described above, the exports of Dien Khanh will cross the 1 million ruble-dollar threshold, thereby establishing a balance between exports and imports within the district and creating favorable conditions for developing the economy and improving the living standards of the people.

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CONCERNING ECONOMIC TIES WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE DISTRICT

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[Article by Hong Long, deputy director of the Marx-Lenin Institute]

[Text] Economic ties, in general, and economic ties within the scope of the district, in particular, are one of the current themes in the activities of our party and state in the initial stage of the period of transition to socialism.

In the proceedings of the 5th Congress of the Party, it is recorded: "The district must be used as the base for redistributing labor, reorganizing production, making good use of labor, arable land, forests and ocean waters, practicing intensive cultivation and specialized farming, developing crop and livestock production and expanding the sectors and trades; ties must be established among agricultural cooperatives, handicraft and small industry installations and other production units through joint businesses established by the agricultural cooperatives and a number of production installations, technical stations and farms and supply stores that procure agricultural products and sell consumer goods established by the state within the district."(1)

The purpose of economic ties is to establish a solid socio-economic structure, one within which economic ties within the scope of the district are an objective necessity in the process of building socialism and defending the socialist fatherland in our country. The objective base of these economic ties is the entire process of profound socio-economic changes: coordinating transformation and building in the three revolutions, the production relations revolution, the scientific-technological revolution and the ideological and cultural revolution; gradually establishing and solidifying socialist production relations; developing and strengthening production forces; building the material-technical bases of socialism; and carrying out socialist industrialization.

These economic ties are not ties that lack identification with any particular class, are not the coordination of the economy with subjective planning designed to meet any objective or requirement whatever. These are socialist economic ties, are that category of the socialist economy that reflects the

many different forms of relationships among economic organizations and economic activity in the process of socialist transformation and socialist construction.

In the period of transition to socialism, especially in the present stage in our country, all economic units and economic organizations are part of the process of revolutionary change that is underway to carry out economic and political tasks in accordance with the general line and the economic line of our party. These economic organizations exist, operate and develop within the general development that takes place in the period of transition to large-scale, socialist production and are under the control and common impact of the revolutionary changes that occur in the period of transition. Therefore, every economic organization, every economic unit is an independent organization, an independent unit which must be solidified and perfected and which has many economic, political, social, geographic and other relations with other units and organizations. Even within every economic organization and unit there are many different relationships within the process of production and reproduction, within the stages of production, circulation, distribution and consumption, within the process of generating capital, within the supplying of materials and technology, within each business activity... On the basis of these relationships, economic ties are gradually established as the process of the development of the economy and society, in general, and each economic unit, in particular, proceeds.

The establishment of economic ties involves a process of organizing and establishing a relationship of binding association and mutual dependency among economic units and economic organizations for specific economic purposes and as part of the ongoing dynamism of socialist economic units.

Economic ties can assume many different forms, that is, be ties based on economic and technical sector, area of operation, territory or locality, and reflect the different characteristics and scales of the process of socialist construction and everyday economic and social activities. Some forms of economic ties are temporary, unstable ties that correspond to the formation and development of economic units that are not yet stable; at the same time, there are stable and permanent economic ties that reflect the necessity for socialist construction.

Many different economic units are found within the scope of the district. They are the agricultural cooperatives, state farms, agricultural stations and farms, forestry sites, handicraft cooperatives, industrial enterprises, commerce stores, marketing cooperatives and so forth of the state-operated or collective segments of the economy, of the many different management echelons of the central level, the province, the district and so forth.

The agricultural cooperatives are the basic economic units within the district. They consist of such internal organizations as the basic labor units, the seed, fertilizer processing, scientific-technical, water conservancy and livestock units, the units of the trade sector...and the management apparatus of the cooperative. These organizations are formed in the process of building, developing and strengthening the cooperative and the

process of gradually achieving a rational division of labor within the cooperative based on the development of the cooperative's economy.

The agricultural cooperatives are not guilds of private farmers, but socio-economic organizations of laboring farmers under the leadership of the working class that carry out economic development by means of the socialist mode of business while building the socio-economic base of the alliance of workers and farmers and steadily advancing to socialism. If the agricultural cooperatives developed in a spontaneous manner for the sole interests of farmers, instead of smoothly combining their interests with the interests of laborers, the interests of the collective and the interests of the socialist state, if the psychology of the private farmer continued to exert a negative impact, we could not rapidly bring about the necessary changes that cooperatives represent in order to uniformly raise labor productivity and produce more products for socialism.

The hard-core and progressive components of the cooperatives, most importantly the party chapters and basic party organizations, as well as the leadership on the upper level, must always make positive decisions that guarantee practical results in order to fulfill the requirements recorded in the proceedings of the 5th Congress: "The utilization of labor and arable land must be based on intensive cultivation, specialized farming and general businesses in order to develop crop production, livestock production, processing and the sectors and trades in the countryside. The allocation of crops, the allocation of livestock and the structure of the sectors and trades must be rational and scientifically based so that all agricultural land as well as all land utilized in forestry is used in a rational manner, so that the environment is protected well, so that each hectare of land yields the highest possible economic returns, so that all sectors and trades earn high income."(2)

The laborer is the central character and the collective master under the socialist system. The laboring farmer is the central character and the collective master within the agricultural cooperatives, within the countryside in the work of building large-scale, socialist agriculture under the leadership of the working class.

Every agricultural laborer has a family that is closely associated with agriculture, with the revolutionary changes that occur in the process of building and strengthening cooperatives. The family is the economic and social cell of the socialist system. The household economy comes into being through the activities of laborers in their gardens and on the plots given them by the cooperative or through the handicraft trades organized by individuals or the cooperative. The household economy is an integral part of the cooperativized economy. If guided and organized well and if its business develops in the proper direction, it will become a constant economic stimulus to the laborer and an important component supplementing the cooperative. Otherwise, it will become a factor of economic spontaneity and have many negative socio-economic consequences.

The building of the agricultural cooperatives into complete socio-economic units is a stage of revolutionary development, one that coordinates and brings together in an integral whole the organizations and economic sectors of the

cooperative and establishes a close association between cooperatives and member families under increasingly correct and stable production guidelines that insure continuous increases in product output and labor productivity and the gradual establishment of a more rational division of labor.

In the process of building and developing cooperatives, their initial, accidental, simple relations in economic activities gradually become more solid and eventually evolve into economic ties among cooperatives and between cooperatives and the various economic organizations, ties by sector, ties based on requirements regarding supplies and technology, the development of production capacity, the expansion of capital sources or business in one or many areas and geographical and economic ties within the scope of the district or the scope of a rationally defined territory to achieve specialization and coordinate general business with the development of the strengths within the district.

Economic ties within the scope of the district are an essential stage of development in the process of socialist construction. They are a requirement of natural socio-economic development and a demand of the revolution, the purpose of which is bringing about a new leap forward within the economy and gradually establishing various forms of economic ties and agro-industrial, agro-forestry, agro-forestry-fishing and other economic structures consisting of increasingly improved economic organizations.

The need for draft power demands the establishment of economic ties involving draft power, considering it to be the first element of agricultural production. In the past, "buffalo were the base of agriculture." Today, as we advance to socialism, tractor stations are the base, are the socialist economic strength capable of transforming agriculture and leading it to large-scale production. However, how are tractors introduced in agriculture? What relationship do we establish between tractors and draft buffalo and cattle? Which economic ties between tractor stations and agricultural cooperatives are rational? Surrounding this matter are many practical and theoretical questions that must be satisfactorily answered before we can truly create rational economic ties involving draft power in areas in which tractors can be used and areas that lack the conditions needed for tractors to operate.

Within agricultural production, breeding is always a factor of decisive significance and can frequently result in unexpected developments, especially under the circumstances of the biological revolution that is now developing by leaps and bounds. On this objective basis, the need arises to establish economic ties in crop and livestock breeding. In many districts, initial forms of these economic ties have been established: rice seed facilities coordinating the efforts of the province, the district, a central cooperative and seed production cooperatives; hog breeding facilities coordinating the efforts of the district, cooperatives, production units and cooperative member families; and fish breeding facilities coordinating the efforts of the district, cooperatives and a number of cooperatives that operate joint businesses in the cultivation of fish for meat.

Water conservancy is the measure of foremost importance within agriculture. In the development of agriculture, complete water conservancy networks are

important economic-technical ties that guarantee intensive cultivation and the development of production. This is the objective base upon which economic ties are formed in the construction of water conservancy projects of all sizes among the units that manage projects, transformer stations and so forth. Here, we face many organizational and policy matters that must be studied and improved upon.

In intensive cultivation, fertilizer is the basic means of production. Organic fertilizer is limited to sources within the cooperative but chemical fertilizers, most importantly nitrogen fertilizer, are industrial products that are invested in agriculture. Therefore, economic ties in the supplying of chemical fertilizers are a matter that must be studied so that we can meet the requirement of delivering fertilizer in a timely manner directly to producers, thereby overcoming every obstacle posed by transportation, the trading of fertilizer for something else, irrational policies and so forth.

The prevention and control of pests and diseases and pesticides occupy an extremely important position in agriculture, especially in a tropical agriculture. Therefore, it is an important requirement that economic ties be established in the supplying of effective pesticides and prevention and control means. In addition to the pesticide supply network of the agricultural supply sector, some districts have organized specialized epidemic prevention units that meet the requirement of promptly bringing outbreaks of pests and diseases under control. However, this is another area that must be studied in detail in order to establish more complete economic ties.

In addition to the economic organizations mentioned above, there are many other organizations within the communications-transportation system, commerce, the cultural sector, the social sector and so forth. Each of these economic organizations occupies a specific position within the socio-economic system within the district. Through the process of gradual development toward centralization, specialization and the development of the strengths of each district, economic relationship and ties develop into a rational economic structure within the scope of the district as we as throughout the country. Among these relationships, the relationship between agriculture and industry is the central relationship, is a law, in the development of the economy toward large-scale socialist production. However, due to our country's special characteristic of advancing directly to socialism without experiencing the stage of capitalist development, the form, rationality and correct position of these economic organizations, especially in the present stage, must be researched to insure that the process of development conforms with the laws of an economy advancing to socialism. Of most basic importance in insuring the rationality and the correct position of economic organizations is to express, in practical terms, the requirement of developing agriculture in a direction that taps the potentials of arable land and labor in the most effective manner possible on the basis of an appropriate allocation of crops and livestock and an appropriate sector and trade structure, ones that comply with the economic line adopted by the party and are consistent with special characteristics of each locality and each specific period of time.

In the process of advancing to socialism from an economy in which small-scale production is still widespread, economic ties are varied and do not fit any

predetermined mold. Determining the forms that these ties assume and which scale is most rational for them entails a process of difficult struggle combining scientific research with the creativity of the laboring masses in all regions of the country in order to develop the untapped rich potentials of the localities.

Within a number of districts, joint businesses have been established between cooperatives that have raw materials (places that raise much corn, places that have much rattan and bamboo and so forth) and cooperatives that have product trades (weaving corn silk rugs, producing exported rattan and bamboo products). These are economic ties formed on the basis of developing the trade sector and establishing a rational division of labor among the agricultural cooperatives within the district.

One of the pressing requirements in developing and encouraging the development of industrial crops production (such as sugar for the sugar, molasses and wine industry, tea for the green tea and black tea processing sector and so forth) is to establish economic ties between production cooperatives and product processing enterprises by proceeding from the relations that now exist in production and trade to the establishment of economic ties between agricultural cooperatives and industrial enterprises and among agricultural production, the handicraft trades and industrial production within the scope of the district.

Agricultural cooperatives that have such handicraft trades as rug weaving and the production of exported rattan and bamboo products or produce such exported agricultural products as bananas, pineapples and so forth have established contract relations with a number of installations of the foreign trade corporations under the Ministry of Foreign Trade. These ties, which are economic ties in the form of contracts or simple trade between cooperatives and individual economic sectors, must be researched and developed into rational economic ties in order to develop production and establish a rational division of labor within the district.

With the development of science and technology and through the efforts of the scientific and technical organizations that have been established by the state to support agriculture, initial forms of scientific-technical and agricultural economic cooperation have emerged. These are agricultural scientific research contract organizations of a number of scientific research facilities that conduct crop seed research for a number of agricultural cooperatives.

Concerning economic ties within the district, many problems involving the organization of production, policies of the state and cadres are gradually emerging and becoming wider in scope. The various levels and sectors must deeply study and gain a thorough understanding of these problems so that they can encourage the application of good experiences and test innovations while giving their attention to promptly resolving those problems that are related to general regulations and policies with a view toward helping to strongly stimulate the socialist revolution within agriculture and advancing agriculture from small-scale production to large-scale socialist production.

Thus, economic ties within the district cannot be ties that develop in a spontaneous manner, ties that are established merely to suit convenience, rather, they must be established through a process of struggle waged under the leadership of the party, of the organizations of the party from the central to the basic levels. Their establishment cannot be based on subjective calculations, on localism or departmentalism, but on the process of all sectors and levels researching and applying knowledge of the natural and social sciences, the economic and technical sciences in a highly responsible and creative manner to the specific circumstances in each area as well as each field and each specific job. This is not easy work. It entails a process of building and struggling to build these ties, a process of simultaneous research, testing and modification, of struggling against everything that reflects conservatism, inertia and small-scale production as well as proposals that are divorced from reality. Only in this spirit can we establish socialist economic ties of many rich and diverse forms within the scope of the district, thereby tapping the creativity and initiative of the masses and correcting the practices of establishing ties merely to suit convenience, establishing temporary, unstable ties that create disorder in economic activity.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Van kien Dai hoi V.,"[The Proceedings of the 5th Congress], Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1982, Volume I, pp 58-59.
2. Ibid., p 56.

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STUDIES: THE LAWS OF THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION--
ABOLISHING CAPITALIST OWNERSHIP AND ESTABLISHING PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF THE BASIC
MEANS OF PRODUCTION

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 5, May 84 pp 54-60

[Article by Quyet Tien]

[Text] In the course of the socialist revolution, immediately after the working class and laboring people seized state power, abolishing capitalist ownership and establishing public ownership of the basic means of production become a necessity. In the "Communist Manifesto," Marx and Engels wrote:

"The proletariat will use its political rule to gradually take all capital from the hands of the bourgeoisie in order to concentrate all means of production in the hands of the state, that is, in the hands of the proletariat organized into the ruling class, and in order to very rapidly increase the size of production forces."(1)

Engels also said that "abolishing private ownership (with capitalism being the highest form of private ownership in history--Q.T.) is the most concise and general description possible of the transformation of the entire social system; this transformation is the inevitable result of the development of industry. Therefore, communists are entirely correct in making the abolition of private ownership their prime requirement."(2)

Loyal to the doctrine of Marx, Lenin also emphasized that "this dictatorship (that is, the dictatorship of the proletariat--Q.T.) faces the Russian Communist Party with the task of thoroughly carrying out and completing the seizure--which has now begun--from the landowners and bourgeoisie and the transfer to the state of the Soviet Republic the right to own all workshops, factories, railroads, banks, ships and other means of production and means of circulation."(3)

The reasons behind the need to abolish capitalist ownership and establish public ownership of the basic means of production are the following:

First, it resolves the fundamental economic antagonisms within capitalist society, that is, the antagonism between the social nature of production

forces and private capitalist ownership. In the old society, this antagonism was the cause of competition, ungoverned production and economic crises of a cyclical nature that ravaged the production forces of society.

By resolving this antagonism of capitalism, the way is opened for the strong development of production forces within the new society.

Secondly, the working class faces a large task following the victory of the political revolution: seizing economic power from the hands of the bourgeoisie. The abolition of capitalist ownership and the establishment of public ownership of the basic means of production destroy the base underlying the control of the economy by capitalist monopolies and remove these corporations from the key positions they hold within the economy. The socialist state then occupies these key positions and uses them as tools in continuing the struggle against the bourgeoisie and developing production in accordance with the plan and for the interests of all laboring people.

Thirdly, these steps must be taken in order to lay the economic base for the dictatorship of the proletariat that is established following the victory of the socialist revolution. Without its own economic base, the dictatorship of the proletariat will be a fragile dictatorship incapable of fulfilling its historic functions and tasks.

In practical terms, abolishing capitalist ownership and establishing public ownership of the basic means of production equate to socialist nationalization.

The realities of socialist construction have shown that it is possible to apply the following forms and methods of nationalization:

1. Confiscating, that is, appropriating, all means of production of the exploiting classes without payment of compensation.
2. Requisition of means of production with payment of compensation for nationalized property to former owners.
3. The gradual development of capitalist ownership of the means of production into socialist ownership through different forms of joint public-private businesses.

Of course, which method to apply is determined by the specific historical circumstances of the socialist revolution, that is, by the level of development of domestic production forces and the comparison of class forces in the country and the world. However, it must be realized that although the methods and rate of nationalization differ from one country to the next, the essence of the process remains the same: abolishing capitalist ownership and establishing socialist ownership of the basic means of production.

For example, in Soviet Russia, the largest industrial enterprises and banks, the main means of transportation and the foreign trade sector were nationalized immediately without payment of compensation. This was because, from the very first days of the revolution, the capitalists, not believing

that the Soviet government could survive, embarked on a counter-revolutionary course and intentionally opposed the government of the laboring people, thereby forcing the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia to take rapid, drastic measures.

In the socialist countries of eastern Europe, the revolutionary governments immediately nationalized without payment of compensation the enterprises and property of German, Italian and Japanese corporations and those persons who collaborated with the fascist powers. The nationalization of the assets of the allied countries within the anti-fascist alliance was carried out with payment of compensation. Then, they confiscated a number of banks from reactionary groups and instituted controls to limit the activities of private enterprises. Next, they established public ownership of medium and small enterprises with partial compensation paid for some).

In the Asian socialist countries, nationalization has also exhibited special characteristics. When the people's government was established, Mongolia had no industry, consequently, its industry was built from the ground up. In the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, all industry once belonged to the Japanese, consequently, nationalization was carried out immediately and without payment of compensation. In our country, for example, we have, generally speaking, nationalized without payment of compensation the enterprises of foreign capitalist monopolies and compradore bourgeoisie and established public ownership of the majority of the enterprises of other members of the bourgeoisie, with partial payment of compensation to their former owners. (The establishment of joint private-public businesses is a method of gradually establishing public ownership of the enterprises of bourgeoisie with partial payment of compensation to their former owners; this payment of compensation takes the form of income to which the bourgeoisie is entitled on the basis of the value of the means of production contributed by him to the joint public-private enterprise).

Nationalization under socialism differs in nature from nationalization under capitalism. Under socialism, nationalized means of production become the property of all the people and serve the interests of the laboring people; under capitalism, nationalized means of production become the property of collective capitalists, that is, the bourgeois state, and are used to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Under the dictatorship of the proletariat government, nationalization is the first legal prerequisite in the socialization of production, is a necessary prerequisite to the shift to socialism. In practical terms, the system of production becomes the asset of all the people when the new production relations have been formed, thereby making it possible for the laboring people to establish their inventory and control over the system of production and the distribution of goods and services throughout the country. Years ago, Lenin pointed out this extremely important characteristic of the socialization of production. He said that socialization differs from simple confiscation in that it is possible to confiscate property in a determined manner without knowing how to correctly take inventory or carry out distribution while such is not possible in the socialization of property.

Under certain historical conditions, the dictatorship of the proletariat can use the system of state capital to carry out socialization under socialism. Under this system, the operations of the industrial and commercial enterprises of capitalists are under one form of supervision or another by the socialist state. Some forms of state capital are:

1. The socialist state allowing capitalists to rent its enterprises.
2. The socialist state transferring, through lease agreements, natural resources, enterprises and so forth of the state to foreign capitalists for temporary use.
3. Capitalist enterprises selling a portion of their output to the state under contracts.
4. Capitalist enterprises placing regular orders for goods with the state and operating on the basis of state raw materials.
5. The establishment of joint public-private enterprises in which representatives of the socialist state play the leading role while former owners receive income as a fixed percentage of investment capital for a specific period of time.

Lenin held that, under certain historical circumstances, the transition to socialism through state capital can facilitate the conversion of the property of medium and small capitalists into socialist property. The positive effects of state capitalism lie in the following: it permits the use of the management experience and technical knowledge of bourgeoisie to serve the interests of socialism; it contributes to the development of large-scale production and helps workers increase their knowledge and develop the habits needed in economic management; it facilitates the struggle against the spontaneity of small-scale production; and it helps to provide the laboring people with more favorable conditions for achieving inventory and control over the production and distribution of the social product.

Thus, we see that nationalization of the basic means of production is a very important law in the transition to socialism.

As mentioned above, Engels maintained that abolishing private ownership is the most concise and general description possible of the transformation of the entire social system. From these words of Engels we can see that abolishing capitalist ownership and establishing public ownership of the basic means of production are the first step of very important significance in the struggle to abolish all private ownership, are an extremely vital part of socialist transformation and socialist construction. And, in the words of our party, they are also a very important part of the production relations revolution.

We know that abolishing private ownership, abolishing exploitation at its source are one of the general objectives of the socialist revolution. Private ownership encompasses private ownership by capitalists and even private ownership by small-scale, self-employed producers, such as farmers, handicraftsmen, etc. The abolition of private ownership by capitalists is

carried out by means of confiscation, requisition or redemption. The abolition of private ownership by small-scale producers, however, is carried out gradually by means of cooperativization on the basis of the principles of voluntary association and respect for their interests and intelligently combining the personal interests of the small-scale producer with the interests of society. Because capitalist ownership was the highest, most developed and largest form of ownership within the old society, it can readily be seen how important the abolition of capitalist ownership is in the victory of the socialist revolution.

We also know that although socialist transformation must be carried out in all fields, that is, in the field of economics, culture and ideology, the economic front is the main front of socialist transformation. Within the economy, socialist transformation takes place in all fields: industry, commerce and agriculture; it involves every class: the bourgeoisie, farmers, small owners and so forth; it encompasses both the transformation of the system of ownership and the transformation of the management and distribution systems. Among all these wide-ranging elements of socialist transformation, the abolition of capitalist ownership is of very important significance. Only by abolishing capitalist ownership can socialist ownership be established, especially during the first years following the victory of the political revolution. Only by abolishing capitalist ownership and establishing socialist ownership can the conditions be created for carrying out transformation in the fields of management and distribution to abolish capitalist management and distribution and establish socialist management and distribution within the state-operated economy, which is the segment that occupies the dominant position within the socialist economy. Only by transforming (essentially, abolishing) the bourgeoisie can we establish favorable conditions for transforming farmers and handicraftsmen in accordance with the guidelines of socialism.

In theory as well as practice, socialist transformation is closely related to socialist construction. It can even be said that the two combine as one to a certain degree. Because, the objective of transformation is to construct. Transformation includes construction, construction includes transformation and construction is of primary importance.

Therefore, in the process of, especially after, abolishing capitalist ownership and establishing socialist ownership, it is especially important that the enterprises that have been socialized be managed well by means of laws so that they operate well, become increasingly productive and efficient and help to stimulate the strong development of socialist transformation and socialist construction. Only by combining transformation with construction in this manner can we successfully carry out the socialist transformation of capitalist industry and commerce. This will also mean the successful implementation of the law on abolishing capitalist ownership and establishing public ownership of the basic means of production, which is one of the universal laws of the socialist revolution and socialist construction in all countries that are following the path to socialism.

In the course of the revolutionary struggle of the working class and people of Vietnam led by our party, we have attached importance to applying the above

mentioned law to the realities of our country. Excluding the national democratic revolution, during which we confiscated a portion of the assets of the French imperialists and the reactionary feudal lackeys of France and established initial bases of the people's democratic economy, immediately after the North was liberated and we began our advance to socialism, we confiscated (and, in some cases, redeemed in payment for crimes) assets within industry, commerce and agriculture of the French imperialists and their lackeys, the compradore bourgeoisie. We immediately nationalized the railroad and banking sectors and the foreign trade businesses of the French. Then, we carried out the transformation of private, capitalist industry and commerce by means of joint public-private corporations and other forms of transformation. In the space of only a few years, this work was virtually completed as was the transformation of agriculture through the establishment of low level cooperatives. These victories in transformation made important contributions to the development of the socialist economy in the North, the nucleus of which was the socialist state-operated enterprises, and to changing the class structure of society in the North along socialist lines, thereby strengthening the North in every respect. And this, as all of us know, had something of an influence upon the victory of the resistance against the United States for national salvation.

After the South was liberated, the dictatorship of the proletariat was established throughout the country and our entire country became independent and reunified and began the advance toward socialism, we also immediately confiscated the enterprises of the imperialist groups, especially the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys, and turned them into property of all the people through nationalization. Then, we began the transformation of private, capitalist industry and commerce together with the socialist transformation of small industry, the handicraft trades and agriculture.

Important achievements have been recorded in the transformation of private industry and commerce. Due to the results of transformation, the state achieved direct control and management of the key sectors of the economy and important economic installations; acquired exclusive foreign trade rights, nationalized private banks and acquired the exclusive right to issue money; unified the management of essential goods; abolished the economy of the compradore bourgeoisie and punished powerful, dishonest merchants; brought a portion of small industry and the handicraft trades into collective organizations ranging from a low to a high level of development; and reorganized, transformed and began to utilize some small merchants. On the basis of and along with carrying out transformation, we have built and gradually strengthened the socialist economic system, bringing it to the position of dominance within the national economy. Socialist production relations have been established and begun to open the way for the development of production forces.

However, besides these achievements, we have also committed a number of shortcomings, such as not closely linking transformation to construction or making construction the purpose of our efforts; not vigorously upholding the right of collective ownership of manual workers and laborers in transformation and construction; not making ourselves fully aware of the special characteristics of private industry and commerce in the South in order to

apply the lines and policies of the party and government in a creative manner and establish suitable methods, stages and forms of transformation, as a result of which we have sometimes acted impetuously in a desire to quickly carry out transformation before carefully preparing the necessary conditions; not linked the transformation of industry and commerce to agricultural transformation; not closely coordinated the three revolutions or the three different kinds of measures, economic, educational and administrative, in transformation; and not continuously guided the socialist transformation of private industry and commerce and have, at some times, even relaxed our efforts in the transformation of private industry and commerce and in market management, thereby allowing the bourgeoisie to re-emerge in both the South and the North (especially ethnic Chinese bourgeoisie in the South), allowing spontaneous, capitalist powers to operate at will and allowing the enemy to use these weaknesses to oppose and undermine us in many areas, thereby disrupting economic and social order.

On the basis of the realities of past years, our party has advanced a number of basic viewpoints concerning the socialist transformation of private industry and commerce. These viewpoints are: transformation must be combined with construction, with primary emphasis upon construction; the transformation of private, capitalist industry and commerce must be carried out in conjunction with transforming small-scale commodity production; the transformation of the bourgeoisie must be closely linked to the transformation of small-scale producers and small merchants; transformation and construction within industry must be coordinated with transformation and construction within agriculture; transformation and construction within production must be coordinated with transformation and construction within distribution and circulation; and, within transformation, the party must be developed into the leadership nuclei within enterprises, all levels of government must be made solid and strong and the activities of the mass organizations must be developed and strengthened. In particular, we must firmly adhere to the party's viewpoint concerning the five different segments of the economy that exist during the period of transition to socialism. It is that these five segments must always develop and change in the following directions: the state-operated and collective segments of the economy must be constantly strengthened and developed, with the state-operated economy playing an increasingly well established dominant role within the national economy. The private, capitalist segment of the economy must be constantly reduced in size and ultimately abolished. The vast majority of the private economy must gradually be reorganized in order to become part of the collective economy. These are the laws of development of the various segments of the economy in the period of transition to socialism. They are also the inevitable results of the struggle between socialism and capitalism during the period of transition in our country.

Firmly adhering to the above is the best way to correctly apply the law: "Abolishing capitalist ownership and establishing public ownership of the basic means of production" to the specific conditions of our country and, on this basis, helping to advance the socialist revolution to total victory.

FOOTNOTES

1. K. Marx and F. Engels: "Selected Works," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1980, Volume 1, p 567.
2. Ibid., p 452.
3. V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Progress Publishing House, Moscow, 1977, Volume 36, p 89.

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THE CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBER

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 5, May 84 pp 61-65

[Book Review by Tien Hai]

[Text] Throughout his life of revolutionary activity, President Ho Chi Minh always concerned himself with teaching and forging the character of the communist party member. As early as 1925, in the training lessons taught to young revolutionary cadres of Vietnam (which were later published by the Propaganda Department of the League of Oppressed Peoples of East Asia as the book "The Revolutionary Road"), he entitled the first lesson "The Character of a Revolutionary." In 1947, in his book "Changing Work Methods," he presented the 12 elements of the character of a genuine revolutionary party and defined the requirements of the party member concerning party consciousness. In 1960, in a speech to the cadres and people of Lang Son Province, he defined the six standards of the party member. And, before he left us, he advised in his Testament: "Every party member and cadre must truly be imbued with revolutionary ethics, truly be diligent, frugal, honest and just. They must keep our party truly pure and be worthy of being the leader, the truly loyal servant of the people."

Thus, what are the elements that make up the character of the communist party member? What is the character that the communist party member must forge for himself? What is the responsibility of the various party committee echelons and organizations of the party in teaching and cultivating the character of the party member? To help everyone understand the thinking of President Ho concerning these basic questions, the Classical Books-Party Documents Publishing Institute of the Marx-Lenin Institute selected speeches and writings of his and printed them in a book entitled "Concerning the Character of the Communist Party Member."(*)

Reading this book of his, we very clearly see that the first requirements of the communist party member established by President Ho are awareness of the ideals of communism; loyalty to the revolutionary cause of the party, of the working class; making sacrifices and struggling throughout one's life for the independence and freedom of the fatherland, for socialism and communism. President Ho also defined just what these requirements entail. To begin with, the communist party member must have a deep understanding of the working class

nature of the party and the tasks of the party, in general, and of each cadre and party member, in particular. He said: "One who is called a party member must clearly understand and know what our party must do and why he joined the party. Our party, the highest organization of the working class, serves the people, serves the class, serves the revolution."(p. 121)(**) "The party is not an organization designed to make officials rich. It must fulfill the tasks of liberating the nation, bringing prosperity and strength to the fatherland and happiness to our compatriots."(p. 22) "The revolutionary must clearly recognize this and firmly adhere to the stand of the working class in order to wholeheartedly struggle for socialism and communism, for the working class and for all laboring people."(pp. 45-46) He also said: "Our communist party members must not forget for one moment that their noble ideal is to struggle for the total independence of the fatherland, for the complete victory of socialism in our country and throughout the world."(p. 98)

"Sacrifice" and "struggle" demand that the party member place the interests of the class and nation above personal interests; that he remain steadfast in the face of each difficulty and challenge; and that whenever he sees "any job that will benefit the revolution, benefit the mass organization, he performs it to its fullest" and "sets an example in everything he does." President Ho said: "Regardless of the circumstances, the party member must place the interests of the party above everything else. If the interests of the party and the interests of the individual conflict, personal interests absolutely must be subordinate to the interests of the party."(p. 50) He pointed out: "Being determined to serve the party, serve the people throughout one's life, this is the noble quality of the revolutionary, is revolutionary virtue, is party consciousness and class consciousness, is a guarantee of the victory of the party, the class and the people."(p. 55)

President Ho had very high regard for those party members who were always loyal to the revolutionary cause of the class and nation and who devoted their lives to struggling for the independence and freedom of the fatherland, for socialism and communism. At the same time, he harshly criticized those who used their position to better their personal interests and harm the interests of the working class and laboring people. He said: "Ours is a party that fights and dies for the interests of the fatherland, the people and the proletariat, not for any other interests. However, some persons consider the party to be a ladder to success. They are not concerned with the lives of the people, only with their own personal interests. They forget that each dong, each grain of rice represents sweat and tears of the people, as a result of which they have become ostentatious and wasteful. They have given themselves the right to live in luxury and enjoy the pleasures of life and this has led them to corruption, decadence, even to crime."(p. 100)

Loyalty to the revolutionary cause of the party and the working class, making sacrifices and struggling throughout one's life for the independence and freedom of the fatherland, for socialism and communism, these are the number one standard, the most noble quality of the communist party member. However, beyond possessing good qualities, the party member must also be a competent person, because only by being competent can he successfully complete the task assigned by the party. President Ho pointed out that when the party is in power, it is even more necessary for party members to have a thorough

understanding of the task assigned to them and be well versed in the job of which they are in charge. He said: "It is of decisive importance that cadres and party members have a clear understanding of the new requirement of the revolution, that is, the need to develop production, and clearly understand that increases in labor productivity are the largest source of wealth. Therefore, it is necessary to effectively organize the new production apparatus, actively study economic management and make technological improvements. Today, the party requires that cadres and party members not only be well versed in politics, but skilled in a special field as well; the leadership they provide cannot be general in nature."(p. 71)

To be well versed in politics and skilled in a special field, the party member must diligently study. President Ho said: "The task of the party member is to make every effort to learn Marxism-Leninism and the lines and policies of the party; study culture, technology and his profession; and constantly raise his political and ideological standards and improve his work skills."(p. 104) Because, "only by learning Marxist-Leninist theory can party members cultivate revolutionary virtues, firmly maintain their stand, deepen their knowledge of politics, raise their political standard and complete the work assigned by the party well."(p. 54) And, "only by gaining a thorough understanding of the revolutionary line can one see the direction in which the revolution is advancing and clearly understand what one must do and which direction must be taken to achieve the objectives of the party in the present stage of the revolution."(p. 107)

Successful study requires a correct attitude and a correct method. The only correct attitude and method are "theory linked to practice... We must turn what we have learned into practical revolutionary action. The purpose of learning must be to apply what we learn, not to be able to speak empty words."(p. 108)

According to the thinking of President Ho, one important requirement regarding the character of the communist party member is: maintaining close ties with the masses, upholding the right of collective ownership of the masses and wholeheartedly serving the masses.

The party is the vanguard unit of the class but the party can only be strong if it maintains close ties with the masses and has their support. Lenin said: "The laboring masses support us. Therein lies our strength. That which will make world communism invincible also lies therein."(1) President Ho pointed out: once a person become a member of the communist party, "he must truly maintain close ties with the people, listen to the opinions and aspirations of the people and study their experiences.

He must turn determination of the party and the government into the determination of the masses.

He must show real concern for the lives of the people."(p. 63). "He must rely upon the masses when launching each production and combat movement. He must work to insure that the masses are always enthusiastic and confident."(p. 114) To achieve enthusiasm and confidence on the part of the masses, the party member "must display a high spirit of responsibility to the party and the

masses, must serve the people with all his strength, must love and respect the people. He must truly respect the people's right of ownership. He absolutely may not assume the airs of a 'revolutionary official' and try to impress others with his authority. He must firmly adhere to the class viewpoint, follow the mass line, diligently learn from the masses, steadfastly rely upon them and teach and mobilize them to carry out each position and policy of the party and state. He must be honest and forthright, concealing neither his ignorance nor his shortcomings or mistakes. He must be humble and close to the masses, not arrogant... He must always concern himself with the lives of the masses. He must be 'just' and display the spirit of 'being concerned about problems before the people, feeling joy after the people.'"(pp. 68-69)

President Ho also stated: "Every job must be performed with the participation of the masses, without the masses, nothing can be achieved."(p. 114) He had harsh criticism for those party members who were distant from the masses. He said: "At present, individualism is controlling some comrades. Seeing themselves as good at everything, they are distant from the masses and do not want to learn from the masses, only be their masters. They are not inclined toward organizing, propagandizing and teaching the masses. They are bureaucratic and authoritarian. As a result, the masses do not have faith in or support them and love them even less. In the final analysis, they fail to succeed at anything."(p. 52)

President Ho also pointed out that the communist party member must possess the sense of organization and discipline, accede fully to the discipline of the party and protect the unity and consensus within the party. He said: "The party's invincible strength lies in the spirit of self-imposed discipline and the strong sense of organization of cadres and party members.

We must...protect the unanimity of the party as we do ourselves. We must fully respect the collective and practice internal democracy; absolutely no one has the right to behave like an autocrat, to place himself above the organization or outside the code of discipline."(p. 69) He also pointed out: "Although our party consists of many persons, when it fights, it fights as one. This is because of its discipline. Our discipline is iron discipline, that is, is strict and self-imposed discipline."(p. 36) He demanded that "every party member set an example of acceding to discipline, not only the discipline of the party, but also the discipline of the mass organizations and the agencies of the revolutionary government."(p. 39)

Concerning the matter of teaching the sense of organization and discipline, President Ho emphasized the need for each party member to make every effort to help build and preserve the unity and consensus within the party. Because, "unity is strength, is the key to success."(p. 92) "Thanks to its close unity and its wholehearted efforts in support of the class, the people and the fatherland, our party, since the day it was founded, has been able to unite, organize and lead our people in a struggle that they have waged with enthusiasm, a struggle in which they have won one victory after another."(p. 132) Consequently, "all cadres and party members, regardless of their position or job, must unite and achieve consensus in order to carry out the task assigned by the party"(p. 93) and "must preserve the unity and consensus of the party as though they were the apple of their eye."(p. 132)

To enable the communist party member to preserve and maintain his character, President Ho proposed the following several basic measures:

Above everything else, each cadre and party member must make every effort to cultivate and forge his character in order to "enhance his revolutionary ethics and purge himself of individualism." Because, revolutionary ethics and individualism are total opposites. Only by possessing revolutionary ethics can the communist party member maintain his character. If he allows himself to be gripped and controlled by individualism, the party member will gradually lose his character and eventually strip himself of his noble title. Therefore, to maintain his character, the party member absolutely must improve and forge himself. President Ho pointed out: "We must make every effort to learn, to improve and transform ourselves in order to make constant progress. If we do not try to make progress, we will regress and fall behind the times. And if we regress and fall behind the times, society will cast us aside as it advances."(p. 43) He also said: "It is not only within the school and in the classroom that we must learn, we must also learn on our own, forge and improve ourselves. We can and must learn, must improve ourselves in each and every revolutionary activity."(pp. 43-44)

Building the organizations of the party and making them solid and strong, especially the party chapters, are of decisive significance in maintaining the character of the communist party member. President Ho pointed out: "The party chapter is the foundation of the party; our work will only proceed well when we have good party chapters."(p. 12) Facts have clearly proven that wherever the party chapter and party committee are strong, party members are also strong; wherever the party chapter and party committee are weak and demoralized, the fighting strength of cadres and party members is paralyzed and they easily become corrupt and degenerate.

Maintaining strict party discipline, promoting the practice of self-criticism and criticism and regularly arranging for the masses to voice their criticisms of party members, these are measures with which President Ho was very concerned. He constantly reminded the various party committee echelons and organizations of the party to practice internal democracy, show love for cadres and party members, show concern for the daily lives of cadres and party members and promptly help them to resolve the difficulties encountered in their lives and work. However, he also pointed out: "Showing love does not mean consoling, indulging or allowing a person to do whatever he pleases."(p. 31) Although we must show love, we must also appropriately discipline those cadres and party members who make mistakes and commit shortcomings. Because, "if we were to never discipline anyone, our discipline would dissolve and the way would be opened for those intent on undermining us."(pp. 32-33) President Ho demanded: "The party must always purge itself of corrupt elements...and maintain very strict discipline from top to bottom."(p. 23) He harshly criticized indications of lax party discipline. He said: "At many places, there are comrades who have made mistakes but not been appropriately disciplined; some have been demoted and sent to other places where they can resume working on the same level from which they were demoted or are demoted in name only and remain working on the same level.

There are some comrades who are deserving of punishment but who, because of the fear of offending them, are merely criticized and warned as a formality just to put the matter behind everyone. There are even places where comrades cover things up for one another, overlook what the other person is doing, deceive their superior and hide things from the mass organizations. Such disciplinary actions not only fails to force these comrades to rectify their mistakes, it also causes them to view disciplinary action with contempt."(p. 18)

Together with maintaining strict discipline, "we must expand the criticism and self-criticism movement within the party, within agencies and mass organizations, in the press and among the people. Criticism and self-criticism must be practiced in a regular, effective and democratic manner from top to bottom and from bottom to top."(pp 39-40)

President Ho also said: "We must not be afraid of making mistakes, only afraid of not being determined to rectify them. To rectify mistakes well, we must be ready to listen to the criticisms voiced by the masses and engage in honest self-criticism."(pp. 51-52)

Another important measure advanced by President Ho is that of intensifying party inspections.

In all the different periods of the Vietnamese revolution, the vast majority of our party members has excellently fulfilled their tasks and proven themselves worthy of being "the leaders, the truly loyal servants of the people." However, in the course of this advance, some persons have inevitably stumbled and fallen behind, even become degenerate and deviant. Therefore, forging the corps of party members in accordance with President Ho's teachings concerning the character of the communist party member is, to us, a constantly necessity.

FOOTNOTES

* Published in 1983.

** The passages within quotation marks followed by page numbers are excerpts from the book "The Character of the Communist Party Member."

1. V.I. Lenin: "Collected Works," Su That Publishing House, Hanoi, 1965, Volume 30, p 72.

7809

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HOW CAN CHINESE HISTORY BOOKS DENY THE EXISTENCE OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE'S 4,000 YEAR CIVILIZATION?

Hanoi TAP CHI CONG SAN in Vietnamese No 5, May 84 pp 66-70

[Article by Professor Pham Huy Thong]

[Text] The ancient Viets, with their developed rice cultivation and metal refining techniques, their appreciation of delicate symmetry and harmony and their Phung Nguyen culture stood on the threshold of a civilized life 4,000 years ago.

A distinct, unique and highly developed Viet civilization blossomed with a brilliance all its own in Vietnam even before the expeditionary forces of the North invaded and imposed Chinese culture upon the people. This civilization manifested itself in the culture and archeology of Dong Son, in the era of the Hung Kings who first built the country, in the race of Lac Viet and in its center, the land of Bach Hac-Phong Chau (Vinh Phu). These are solid conclusions that have been drawn from scientific research projects conducted by Vietnamese archeologists and historians over the years.

The celebrated Red River culture, which coincided in time with the Dong Son drums of Van Lang-Au Lac and spread to many places in Southeast Asia, is now known and admired throughout the world. Our arguments concerning the civilization and history of Vietnam and the relationship between the ancient Viets and the peoples of the other countries of the region have been accepted everywhere they have been presented, partly because our people spent an entire "40 centuries in battle" writing their history and partly because we have conducted our research of ancient history in a serious fashion. The notable history book published in the United States in 1983. "The Birth of Vietnam," has received acclaim because it represents the first publication in book form within the United States of profound, new and solid historical arguments based on scientific research projects of ours concerning the position and importance of the Dong Son culture, the significance of the uprising led by the two Trung Sisters...

New scientific discoveries have made our people even more proud of our history, of our nation's beginnings. However, in the face of our scientific achievements, in the face of the feelings felt by the scholars and people of

other countries for our nation, many press publications and scientific agencies of the Chinese expansionists and hegemonists have redoubled their efforts to refute our nation's increasingly clear and deep knowledge of its unique civilization and long history. For example PEOPLE'S DAILY AND GUANG-MING DAILY recently praised Chinese history books for expressing doubts about the existence of the country of Van Lang and the Hung Kings, for denying the existence of the country Au Lac, etc.

Let us see how grossly they have distorted historic fact and exactly what historic fact tells us.

1. They have made every effort to deny the existence in history of the country of Van Lang-Au Lac.

Years ago, some chroniclers of Vietnamese history doubted the existence of the formative period of the country because it was described far too much in genre of legends (even myths) and some persons wanted to exclude the age of the Hung Kings from factual history because they could not obtain reliable historic data on it. In recent years, some researchers of the Viet nation in China have repeated similar arguments but taken them further through some specious, deductive reasoning for the purpose of distorting historic fact.

According to these Chinese historians, there was no Viet tribe, only the "Bach Viet," who lived south of the Yangtze River. Although some Viet communities had established countries, such as the country of Viet of the Cau Tien and the country of Nam Viet of the Trieu Da, these were not well established countries and did not survive for long. A number of other Viet communities never established countries. The entire Viet tribe was assimilated by the Han beginning more than 2,000 years ago. Chinese scholars have acknowledged one important historic event, the assimilation of Bach Viet by the Han, that is, have admitted that the Han engaged in expansionism, committed aggression against and assimilated the Viet tribes; however, they do not want to say anything about another important historic fact, namely, that there was a Viet tribe that tenaciously resisted assimilation by the Han, the Lac Viet, that is, the present day Vietnamese. Publicly calling the Viet tribes a vital part of China while very simplistically stating that Vietnam was the land of the Viet tribes, Chinese history books clearly reflect sinister expansionist intentions that the historians and people of Vietnam must strongly criticize.

Historic fact proves that the majority of the ancient Viet tribes were invaded and assimilated by the Han. Historic fact also proves that the nation of Vietnam stubbornly resisted assimilation by the Han, that Vietnam and China have long been separate countries, one in the South, one in the North, each the master of itself. As Nguyen Hue made known, "Every heaven has its stars." Vietnamese culture incorporated factors of the Han culture and the Han culture incorporated cultural factors of the Viet tribes and factors of Vietnamese culture. Vietnam did not become civilized or grow as a result of the impact of China as asserted by Chinese historians. As every highly developed culture has, the Dong Son culture and, later, the Dai Viet culture, incorporated many different factors and also spread their light to other places. Of special significance is the fact that although the ancient Viets stood ready to accept cultural factors from many different directions, they mainly displayed their

own cultural creativity and developed their own unique national civilized tradition.

It has not only been in recent years that Vietnamese researchers have concerned themselves with shedding light on the nation's origins. However, it has only been in the last several decades that archeology has provided us with solid scientific evidence of the existence of a separate ancient Viet civilization, a long-standing, ancient Viet national community that predated by several thousand years and was the forerunner of the Vietnamese and Vietnamese society of today.

It is not just now that China has begun to deny the high level and the freedom of development of the people of the ancient land of Giao. However, it must be said that it is only recently that China has begun to very brazenly, very furiously deny the existence of our 4,000 year civilization. Because, today, the blind denials of several hundred years ago, several decades ago, are no longer credible in light of the evidence that we now have that the Hung Kings, that Van Lang-Au Lac not only exist in legend, but also in irrefutable, specific, material and scientific archeological ruins, ruins which have been dated by modern scientific methods.

2. Unable to refute the scientific basis of discoveries that verify the existence of the period of the Hung Kings at the dawn of the history of the Vietnamese people, they have turned to criticizing Vietnam and accuse modern day Vietnamese history books of presenting incorrect understandings of a number of ancient Vietnamese history books.

They have voiced the criticism that Vietnam confuses Van Lang and Bach Viet. This mistake or inaccuracy only occurred once, some 500 years ago, during the reign of Ngo Si Lien of the early Le Dynasty. Vietnamese archeological research projects long ago determined: Van Lang did not extend to Dongdinh Lake or the Yangtze River and did not encompass Hunan either, but neither was it confined to the boundaries of present day Vietnam. Archeological studies show: in Hunan, the large region that lies immediately to the north of our country today was part of the land of the Dong Son culture, that is, was land of the Hung Kings. Vietnam, instead of encompassing all Bach Viet, was a part of Bach Viet during the period that preceded its assimilation by the Han. The vast majority of Bach Viet was assimilated by the Han; Vietnam escaped this assimilation.

Bach Viet did not only encompass, along with Van Lang-Au Lac, only a few other Viet communities, as Chinese historians maintain. How many were there? Of course, it is impossible to say with absolute certainty "100" but there were surely more than a few. Regardless, the ancient people in southern Hunan shared land with the ancient Viets within the territory of present day Vietnam; and, beyond the border of the country of the Hung Kings, to the north, were other Viet communities, still Viets, communities that extended up to the Yangtze River. Today, excluding Vietnam, many other Viet tribes and Viet countries have disappeared, have dissolved into the world of China. They do not deny this historic fact and if they think of the past at all, it is only to recall that these Viets were the ancient relatives of the some of the people of present day China, especially in Hunan.

3. They also assert that we ourselves admit that the Lac Viet, the creators of the Dong Son culture, crossed into Vietnam from the Chinese side of the border.

It is correct that one Vietnamese researcher advanced this hypothesis in the 1950's, that is, he maintained that the Lac Viet came from China and mixed with the native Indonesians, giving to the places where they lived the name Keo (or Giao), or keeping the name already in use, and bringing higher intelligence, if not actual civilization.

Chinese scholars argue that there was no significant civilization in ancient Vietnam before it was "enlightened" by the Chinese because they either do not know or want to know about the Dong Son culture. This attitude is identical to that of Western colonialist scholars who, when coming into contact with the Dong Son culture, asserted that such a beautiful culture could not have been created by the natives and had to have been the creation of another race. Although there are numerous vestiges of the Dong Son culture in this country, both Chinese and Western scholars refuse to acknowledge their indigenous origins. This thoughtless, absurd argument can only come from the minds of die-hard racists.

In recent years, Vietnam's sciences (archeology, anthropology and the study of historical documents coordinated with ethnology, the study of customs, comparative linguistics and so forth) have completely refuted the so called arguments that the Lac Viet came here from elsewhere, arguments advanced by cloudy but imaginative minds, such as the arguments that they came here from Chekiang and Fukien, from the region of the Huai River by crossing the sea, or from Persia or even farther away, from the Black Sea, after wandering thousands of miles across the Steppes.

The truth of history is that the ancient Viets, who existed for dozens of centuries, beginning with the Hoa Binh-Bac Son culture, created the cultural forms that linked the Bronze Age to the early Iron Age in the deltas of the Red, Ma and Ca Rivers. The Dong Son culture that emerged from the life of the ancient Viet people left its mark in such famous ruins as Phung Nguyen, Dong Dao, Go Mun, Dong Son, Thieu Duong, Lang Ca, Lang Vac and so forth. The ancient Viets came from Vinh Phu, Thanh Hoa, Nghe Tinh...not from some distant land! In other words, the Dong Song civilization, the Van Lang-Au Lac national community and the nation-state of the Hung Kings had their origins here, in our country thousands of years ago.

The social traits, thinking, aesthetics and style of the ancient Viets were created by the ancient Viets themselves. The rich, diverse and independent character of Viet civilization resulted from the fact that this land was a point of convergence of migration from all four directions, was an intersection, was always wide open to influences from everywhere.

4. Symbolizing the highly developed, ancient Viet civilization is a type of bronze drum which scholars of all countries, agreeing with us, call the "Dong Son Drums." Chinese scholars, however, are doing their best to claim as Chinese the skills of the persons who created the Dong Son drums.

According to the method of classification established by the scholar Al Hegel, drums that have a fat rim, tapering shape and spreading base and are intricately decorated are type I drums. It is these that are called the Dong Son drums because they represent the Dong Son culture, the main center of which was located in what is our country today.

Chinese scholars have expressed indignation over this and, during one period, went to great lengths to play down the prestige of the Dong Son drums, the most typical specimens of which have been found in Vietnam: the Ngoc Lu drums, the Hoang Ha drums, the Da River drums and, most recently, the Co Loa drums. To do this, they reversed the order of classification, placing the type II drums (the Muong drums, and calling them Chinese drums) first--as the "prototype"; they then placed type I (our Dong Son drums) second--as the "stereotype." However, there is no scientific or any satisfactory reason for doing this and this "innovation" has not been responded to by scholars.

Now, they have come up with a different way to confuse the issue of the Dong Son culture in the territory of Vietnam, where the Dong Son drums are considered to have been the most beautiful, the most numerous and the earliest to appear. While not denying that the Dong Son drums in Vietnam are beautiful, numerous and typical, they are publicly saying that the Dong Son drums appeared first in China. Recently, in Yunnan, they discovered a short, small, crude, unskillfully decorated type of drum and loudly proclaimed this type--the Tai Heipa-Yun Jiapa type--as the oldest known drums, as the forerunner of all Dong Song drums, even those in Vietnam. However, unfortunately for them, at about the same time, a similar drum, the Dao Xa-Thuong Nong drums, was discovered in Vinh Phu. Moreover, we in Vietnam have known about the existence of this type of drum since the 1920's when some were discovered in Tung Lam in Ha Son Binh Province.

The drums that China considers to be the earliest ever discovered have not been dated by reliable scientific methods. An early date cannot be established merely on the basis of crudeness, lack of intricate design and poor quality. These drums might lack refinement because they emerged during an early period or possibly because they were made at a time or place where skills were underdeveloped or declining.

Whatever the case, China's desire to be recognized as the first place where Dong Son drums were made is, in the final analysis, completely absurd. Because, whether ancient Vietnam or ancient Yunnan was the site of their emergence, the Dong Son drums were still first made within the civilized, developed region of the Red River; the Dong Son drums were still first made by the ancient Viets. The southern portion of Hunan was part of the old land of the Hung Kings and southern Hunan (and Hofo [present day Guangxi Province]) joined the two Trung Sisters in their uprising against the Han army. Thus, the Dong Son drums, even if they actually were first made in southern Hunan, were still made by our forefathers, not by the Han. Modern Chinese scholars are doing nothing more than continuing the absurd practice of ancient Chinese bibliographers: crediting Wan Yuan, the one who destroyed the Dong Son culture, destroyed the Dong Son drums, or crediting Khong Minh of the Three Kingdoms period, who attacked Bach Viet and took possession of the bronze drums, with the achievement, with the glory of creating the bronze drums!

5. In a systematic distortion of ancient Vietnamese history, modern Chinese historians are continuing the tradition of big country expansionism and hegemony.

The ancient Chinese who chronicled the history of the land of Nam Giao, while they did not deny the existence of the Lac paddies, the Lac people or the Hung Kings and the Lac officials and Lac generals or the two Trung Sisters, they only praised Nham Dien, Tich Quang and Ma Vien as "bringers of light." Chinese historians of ancient times had to recognize the Trung Sisters as courageous but they viewed them as rebels. Present day Chinese historians deny the existence of the period of the Hung Kings who first built the country, deny the existence of the ancient Viet people and civilization and, in the name of Marxism, call the patriotic Trung Sisters who protected the nation's values in the face of Han aggression, "reactionaries."

To the contrary, on the basis of solid scientific evidence, Vietnamese archeology and history have proven that the glorious period of the Hung Kings who built and defended the country actually existed; that if there were no brilliant Dong Son culture there would be no Vietnamese nation today.

Examining the 1,000 years of Chinese domination, one observation is deserving of attention: throughout that interminably long period, the petitions by the ruling Chinese officials to their emperor were filled with words of hatred and contempt for the dim-witted and disobedient people of the South, who, never content, were always rising in rebellion and bringing calamity upon themselves. The ancient disciples of great nation expansionism and big country hegemony who chronicled Chinese history and those disciples of today are alike, all sympathizing with those feudal officials. However, the Vietnamese generations and the Vietnamese historians of today are deeply grateful to those persons who were called dim-witted and disobedient, to those patriotic generations that followed them, who, through their courage, through their flesh and blood, cultivated, from one generation to the next, the national spirit and the will to fight to defend the country of the brave Vietnamese heroes who disarmed the enemy at the Chuong Duong wharf, defeated the enemy in the mountains and jungles of Cao Lang...

What is the present day evaluation of the 1,000 years of Chinese domination, years of desperation and cruel oppression, of heroic struggle that led to the rebuilding of the country in the 10th century? Chinese history books maintain that the people of Giao Chi-Annam became the master of their destiny as a result of being "enlightened" by the Han and the Yang. Vietnamese historians, on the other hand, have refuted this erroneous argument many times in forums at home and abroad. Today, in the face of the new distortions advanced by the big country expansionists and hegemonists, allow us to again state: it is not as a result of the Han and the Yang Dynasties, but as a result of resisting the Han and the Yang Dynasties that Vietnam is still Vietnam.

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